

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 320 330

EC 231 138

AUTHOR Guerrero, Frank; McMurtry, Mary
TITLE Quality Improvement Program Plan for Special Educators, 1988-89. OREA Report. Evaluation Section Report.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, NY. Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.
PUB DATE Feb 90
NOTE 114p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Decentralization; *Disabilities; Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; *Inservice Teacher Education; Paraprofessional School Personnel; Participant Satisfaction; *Participative Decision Making; *Program Development; *Program Evaluation; *Special Education Teachers; Teaching Skills
IDENTIFIERS *New York (New York)

ABSTRACT

The state-funded Quality Improvement Program Plan (QUIPP) for Special Educators provided professional development training to New York City special education teachers and paraprofessionals to improve the quality of instruction for students with mildly to moderately handicapping conditions. The program was designed to be participant-driven and district-based; it sought to increase the knowledge base and instructional competencies in self-selected and locally determined areas. The program evaluation for the 1988-89 school year, the program's second year of operation, assessed the planning and implementation processes and examined the impact on participants and their students, through interviews with several sources and review of program documents. Findings are presented in the areas of program process, participant levels, participant feedback, and program achievements. Overall, participants' opinions of QUIPP were very positive. However, time and expediency constraints restricted the level of involvement of school-based members in the process of planning and organizing the programs. Several recommendations conclude the report. (JDD)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED320330

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.



OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

Quality Improvement Program Plan
for Special Educators
1988-89

EC 231138

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robert L. Lohman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EVALUATION SECTION
John Schoener, Chief Administrator
February 1990

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

Quality Improvement Program Plan
for Special Educators
1988-89

Prepared by
Instructional Support Evaluation Unit

Frank Guerrero, Unit Manager
Mary McMurtry, Evaluation Consultant

New York City Public Schools
Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment
Robert Tobias, Director



NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Robert F. Wagner, Jr.
President

Irene H. Impellizzeri
Vice President

Gwendolyn C. Baker
Amalia V. Betanzos
Stephen R. Franse
James F. Regan
Edward L. Sacowsky
Members

Joseph A. Fernandez
Chancellor

It is the policy of the New York City Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, handicapping condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or sex in its educational programs, activities, and employment policies as required by law. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact his or her Local Equal Opportunity Coordinator. Inquiries regarding compliance with appropriate laws may also be directed to Mercedes A. Nestfield, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, 110 Livingston Street, Room 501, Brooklyn, New York 11201, or to the Director, Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education, 25 Federal Plaza, Room 33-130, New York, New York 10278.

1/1/90

EVALUATION SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Quality Improvement Program Plan for Special Educators (QUIPP) provided supplemental professional development training to special education teachers and paraprofessionals as a means of improving the quality of instruction for students with mildly to moderately handicapping conditions. Organized in the 1987-88 school year as a participant-driven and district-based program, QUIPP has also been regarded as an opportunity for district organizational development. The program has been a collaboration between the New York City Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers (U.F.T.) in consultation with the Council of Supervisors and Administrators (C.S.A.). It was funded in both its first and second years by a State Incentive Grant.

POPULATION SERVED

QUIPP was designed to address the professional development interests of special education teachers and paraprofessionals in the elementary and intermediate/junior high schools of the 32 community school districts plus the Chancellor's School (IS 277). In the 1988-89 school year, those eligible to participate included special education classroom teachers, crisis intervention teachers, resource room teachers, speech teachers, and paraprofessionals who deliver services mandated by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of each special education student. First year teachers were not included, however, as they participate in mandatory staff development activities specially designed to address their needs.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The 1988-89 objectives of QUIPP were to increase the knowledge base and instructional competencies of special education teachers and paraprofessionals in self-selected and locally-determined areas of special education professional

development through a variety of training opportunities. The objectives also included the establishment of a responsible group in each district that would be representative of the eligible population and have real decision-making prerogatives.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the 1988-89 program evaluation was to assess the process of planning and implementing participant, interest-driven, district QUIPP plans. It also looked at the impact of the year's activities on participants and their students. The evaluation was based on a number of data sources: interviews with and surveys of both eligible and actual participants; interviews with and surveys of members of the district QUIPP advisory committees (DAC); interviews with members of the Central QUIPP Advisory Committee (CAC); and central and district program documents.

Data collection was carried out in two phases. The first phase focused on the district process of planning, organizing and implementing district QUIPP plans. In the second phase, participants were questioned about specific activities they attended: the quality and usefulness of the training, the applicability of their new skills or knowledge in the classroom, any changes in their students as a result of their application, and the impact of the activity on their feelings as educators.

FINDINGS

By the end of the 1988-89 school year, QUIPP had been generally effective in meeting its stated objectives for the year. Among the major evaluation findings were the following:

Program Process

- Most members of the DACs (comprised of school-based special educators and administrators and district-based administrators) saw their roles and

responsibilities as participating in general discussions and decisions at DAC meetings, promoting QUIPP in the schools, and gathering feedback from eligible participants. The organization, administration, and planning of training activities were left largely to district-level members because of time constraints on school-based members, lack of confidence in being equal contributors, and/or lack of opportunities to be more involved.

- Of the DAC members participating in this evaluation, only teacher and paraprofessional members were found to have said they were not involved in the planning process. The percentage of paraprofessional respondents not involved in this process (22 percent) was almost twice that of the responding teachers.
- DAC members were unaware often of the existence or purpose of the CAC. Likewise, eligible participants were frequently unaware of the existence or purpose of the DAC in the program process.
- Most members described the DAC group process as participatory, warm, open, collaborative, and consensus-seeking. However, almost half also indicated that DAC program choices were based on proposals presented by a core group in the DAC.
- DAC members expressed needs for and interests in a variety of orientations/training to increase their individual or collective effectiveness. These included knowledge of what is happening in other DACs, programming and administrative skills, and interpersonal and group process skills.
- Many considerations influenced the final configuration of a district's QUIPP offerings in addition to the results of the eligible participant training interests assessment. Most significant were: the availability of relevant courses and workshops and qualified instructors; district policies, goals, and objectives; and the findings of the previous year's internal program evaluations. Also at issue was the unavailability and general undesirability of using substitute teachers to release classroom teachers for training during school hours.
- District QUIPP plans were generally quite adaptable to changing circumstances during the course of the year. Activities were cancelled and added according to registration levels, and schedules were open to adjustment as necessary.

QUIPP Participation Levels

- Of those eligible to participate in QUIPP activities, 66 percent of the responding teachers and 52 percent of the responding paraprofessionals said they received an Interest Inventory. Almost all who said they received it, completed it.
- Eighty-four percent of the responding eligible participants received information on the QUIPP offerings, and 70 percent were also encouraged to participate in other ways. Of those who received the offerings, 87 percent found topics relevant to their professional interests. Seventy-three percent thought at least some of the schedules were convenient. Sixty-four percent of those receiving the offerings registered, but this was only 54 percent of the eligible participants questioned.
- The most common reason for not participating in QUIPP was the inability to attend activities outside of school hours. This was usually the result of important prior commitments. Among the other reasons given were transportation problems (related to after-school activity schedules) and offerings irrelevant to one's professional interests, level of education, or student population.

Participant Feedback

- Participants felt that the inclusion of general education teachers and paraprofessionals in QUIPP would both advance the process of mainstreaming special education students and foster an appreciation of and respect for special education.
- Respondents also felt that first-year special educators should be allowed to participate in QUIPP activities if they so wished. Special education students would only stand to gain from their inclusion.
- Participants thought that the inclusion of related service staff, such as social workers and guidance counselors, in QUIPP would enhance the holistic approach to addressing special education student needs.
- Participants appreciated the program incentives of college credits toward pay differentials, pay for

attendance, and the free training that QUIPP provided. However, they would also like to be able to enroll for more than 30 hours of instruction when districts experience overall low enrollment.

- Many comments and suggestions were received about various other elements of their district programs, including: schedules; activity formats; and training topics, contents, and methods.
- Most participants found the instructional level of activities that they attended appropriate to their education and experience.
- Most instructors were judged to be very qualified by the participants. The organization, comprehensiveness, content, approach, and usefulness of the training presentations generally received very high marks as well. However, respondents often commented that those instructors who received low ratings did not relate well to participants as professionals, gave boring presentations, and/or had nothing new or practical to offer.
- Materials provided by QUIPP were well appreciated.

Program Achievements

- In general, responding participants found that the QUIPP activities they attended met their learning expectations, although of the different participant categories, the paraprofessionals were the least satisfied. Seventy-one percent of the respondents said they would like to receive more training, especially if the activities addressed practical, "hands-on" skills and techniques, focused on specific groups of children (e.g. by problem, age, or level), and/or provided more advanced instruction.
- QUIPP's impact on participant feelings as professional educators was greatest in their more optimistic outlook on the future of special education students. Many participants also reported feeling better qualified, less frustrated, more confident with their students, more supported, and refreshed.
- Forty-four percent of the responding participants reported applying knowledge and skills acquired through QUIPP in their classrooms. Some had not had opportunities to do so yet because of the timing of the training during the year, and some did not find

their training applicable to classroom usage. Other obstacles to putting their knowledge and skills into practice in the classroom included teacher/para partners who had not received the same instruction, training limitations or weaknesses, inadequate class materials, uncooperative school administrations, district policies (e.g. blocking introduction of a new instructional program in language arts), and other systemic problems.

- Teachers and paraprofessionals who applied what they had gained in the QUIPP training activities frequently perceived changes - some dramatic - in their students. Improvements were noted: interest or involvement in learning, understanding and retention of information, behavior, communication with the teacher and/or paraprofessional, self-confidence/self-esteem, and attendance.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, participants' opinions about QUIPP were very positive. Many volunteered remarks that such a professional development program, providing practical instruction and offering opportunities to network with one's colleagues, was long overdue. There were quite a few criticisms and suggestions for improving many aspects of the program, but these were most often given in a friendly spirit of helping the still-young program improve and serve increasing numbers.

The members of the Central QUIPP Advisory Committee and district QUIPP advisory committees clearly indicated that, while districts are at various stages of engaging in a truly participatory process and of taking ownership of their district plans, overall from the first year there had been significant progress toward achieving a genuine district-based program. Nevertheless, time and expediency constraints have restricted the level of involvement of school-based members in the process of planning and organizing the district QUIPP programs.

Conclusive evidence of QUIPP's effectiveness in advancing the quality of instruction for special education students will not be attainable for several years yet. Nevertheless, QUIPP is clearly making progress in addressing the professional interests of special education teachers and paraprofessionals. This, in turn, has had the effect of improving staff morale and enthusiasm. A major accomplishment of the program at the conclusion of its second year is that participants are putting what they have gained through QUIPP into practice in their classrooms, and reporting changes in their students as a direct result.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the criticisms and suggestions put forward both by eligible and active QUIPP participants and members of the district QUIPP advisory committees.

- Improve CAC support to the DACs through:
 - Organizing training workshops in areas identified by DAC members as interests or needs to improve DAC effectiveness;
 - More frequent, regular communications with the DACs (e.g. QUIPP newsletter) containing news about successful, innovative district QUIPP activities and practices, training resource information, updates and clarifications of the program guidelines, etc.; and
 - Building more personal and trusting relationships with DAC members through CAC member visits to the districts.
- The DACs, with CAC technical assistance and support, need to take steps to promote a full participatory and collaborative group process of planning and implementing QUIPP in the districts.
 - Promote the active participation of all DAC members in their respective DACs, especially teachers and paraprofessionals, through improved group process.
 - Clarify and, if necessary, revise policies governing how DAC members are selected, the length of member terms, and other matters

influencing the levels of member involvement in QUIPP.

- Orient new members to the program and to their roles and responsibilities.
- DACs need to articulate clear, quantitative and qualitative objectives for improving special education instruction that will enable them to track progress towards their achievement through QUIPP activities over time. The introduction of student needs assessments, completed by eligible QUIPP participants, prior to conducting the Interest Inventories could help focus both program organizers and program participants.
- The CAC should clarify and/or revise the program guidelines to enable DACs to respond more appropriately to participant interests and program realities.
 - Make budgetary allowances for administrative support of QUIPP in the districts.
 - Offer practical, realistic means for providing participant-requested training during school hours.
 - Permit individuals to participate (with credit/pay) in more than 30 hours of training if overall registration in a district is low.
 - Clarify that participation in QUIPP after school hours is voluntary.
 - Allow general education teachers and paras with mainstreamed students, as well as staff with regular contact with special education students, to participate in relevant QUIPP activities.
 - Allow first year special education teachers and paraprofessionals to participate in QUIPP.
 - Permit limited numbers of parents of special education students to audit QUIPP activities, as appropriate.
- Improve the quality, variety, and timing of informational/promotional mechanisms in the districts. Particular efforts should be made to reach more paraprofessionals and facilitate their registration and participation.
- Limit training in computer skills to those who have or will soon have the necessary hardware and software in their classrooms.

- Make certain that recipients of training in new methodologies or approaches will have the materials and supplies to implement these practices in their classrooms.
- Eliminate activity participation restrictions by teacher/para category. Essential course or degree prerequisites, if any, should be clearly stated in activity descriptions. Higher-than-expected registrations should be dealt with by adding extra sessions or repeating the activity at a later date.
- DACs should provide some offerings whose subjects are focused on working with specific student levels or different student problems. Some should also take into account varying levels of participant education and teaching experience. Accurate titles and clear, detailed activity descriptions would enable eligible participants to make selections relevant to their student population, professional development interests, and backgrounds.
- Offer eligible participants with highly specialized interests or responsibilities the option of attending courses, workshops and conferences outside the basic district QUIPP offerings.
- DACs should institute procedures to review prospective trainers' qualifications to provide new, practical, and stimulating instruction that is relevant to special education in the city schools. Their ability to relate well to adult learners is also extremely important.
- The Board of Education and/or district administrations need to address systemic central and district elements that are unsupportive of and detrimental to district-based and/or participant-driven programming. These include:
 - The lack of substitute teachers to release eligible participants for training during school hours;
 - The lack of regular staff development days throughout the school year;
 - The inadequate and inequitable provision of classroom materials;
 - Policies preventing the introduction of viable and stimulating ideas/approaches to teaching special education students; and
 - Severe delays in releasing program monies.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATORS
1988-89

Table of Contents

	<u>PAGE</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Program Overview	1
Program Objectives	2
Evaluation Scope and Procedures	3
Scope of Report	5
II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	6
Program Organization	6
Central QUIPP Advisory Committee	6
District QUIPP Advisory Committees	7
Program Activities	8
III. PROGRAM PROCESS FINDINGS	10
Central QUIPP Advisory Committee	10
District QUIPP Advisory Committees	13
Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation Processes	26
IV. IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS	39
Eligible Population Configuration	39
Response to the Interest Inventory	40
Response to the QUIPP Offerings	41
Participant Feedback	46
V. PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS	72
Program Impact on Participants	72
Application of Learning	80
Program Impact on Special Education Students	83
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	88
Conclusions	88
Recommendations	90

List of Tables

		<u>PAGE</u>
TABLE 1	Awareness of the Central QUIPP Advisory Committee	11
TABLE 2	Perceived CAC Impact on District Process of Planning and Implementation	12
TABLE 3	Perceived Roles and Responsibilities of DAC Members, by Position	14
TABLE 4	Level of Participant Awareness of District Advisory Committees	15
TABLE 5	Member Attendance of All DAC Meetings	17
TABLE 6	Level of Member Involvement in the Planning Process	18
TABLE 7	Level of Involvement in Planning Process, by Position	19
TABLE 8	Modus Operandi of the DACs	21
TABLE 9	Percentages of Requests for Training/Orientation for DACs as a Whole	23
TABLE 10	Percentages of Requests for Training/Orientation by Individual DAC Members to Increase their Effectiveness	24
TABLE 11	Percentages of Individual Member Training Interests, by Position	26
TABLE 12	Interest Inventory Formats Utilized by the DACs	28
TABLE 13	I.I. Format Used by DACs, by Majority Opinion	28
TABLE 14	Factors Influencing the Design of District QUIPP Plans	29
TABLE 15	Significant Issues Discussed at DAC Meetings	31
TABLE 16	Participant Involvement in the Interest Inventory	41
TABLE 17	Relevancy of the Training Topics	43
TABLE 18	Convenience of Activity Schedules	43

TABLE 19	Configuration of Eligible Participants Response to the QUIPP Offerings	44
TABLE 20	Participant Reasons for Not Registering	45
TABLE 21	Participant Recommendations for Eligibility Expansion	47
TABLE 22	Participant Feedback on Program Incentives	49
TABLE 23	Appropriateness of Activity Format to Training Subject	53
TABLE 24	Appropriateness of Instructional Levels to Education and Experience of Activity Participants	55
TABLE 25	Activity Participant Suggestions about Instructional Levels	56
TABLE 26	Participant Feedback on Training Methods	57
TABLE 27	Activity Participant Suggestions for Content Improvements	58
TABLE 28	Activity Participant Assessments of Instructor Qualifications	59
TABLE 29	Feedback on the Organization of the Activity Presentation	61
TABLE 30	Feedback on the Comprehensiveness of the Activity Presentation, Given the Time Available	62
TABLE 31	Feedback on the Quality of Interest/Stimula- tion of the Activity Presentation	63
TABLE 32	Feedback on Learner Participation in the Activity Presentation	64
TABLE 33	Feedback on Relevancy of Activity Presentation	65
TABLE 34	Feedback on Practicalness of Activity Presentation	66
TABLE 35	Physical Aspects of Activity Learning Environments	68
TABLE 36	Social Aspects of Activity Learning Environments	68

TABLE 37	Activity Participant Assessment of the Appropriateness of Materials to the Training Subject	70
TABLE 38	Participant Assessment of Usefulness of Materials Provided in Activity	70
TABLE 39	Participant Assessment of Adequacy of Materials Provided in Activity	71
TABLE 40	QUIPP Impact Indicators, by Participant Position	74
TABLE 41	Activity Attainment of Participants' Learning Expectations	75
TABLE 42	Activity Participants Who Want More Training in the Same Subject, by Position	76
TABLE 43	Activity Participants Who Want More Training in the Same Subject, by District	76
TABLE 44	Activity Impact on Participants' Feelings as Professional Educators, by Position	78
TABLE 45	Activity Impact on Participants' Feelings as Professional Educators, by District	79
TABLE 46	Obstacles Encountered by Activity Participants in Applying Knowledge and Skills, by Position	81
TABLE 47	Changes Perceived in Student Interest/Involvement in Learning	84
TABLE 48	Changes Perceived in Student Understanding and Retention	85
TABLE 49	Changes Perceived in Student Behavior	85
TABLE 50	Changes Perceived in Student Behavior by Nonclassroom Teachers	86
TABLE 51	Changes Perceived in Effective Student Communication with Teacher/Paraprofessional	86
TABLE 52	Changes Perceived in Student Self-Confidence/Self-Esteem	87
TABLE 53	Changes Perceived in Student Attendance	87

I. INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Quality Improvement Program Plan for Special Educators (QUIPP) is a staff development program designed to support the integration of special education instructional services within the community school districts. Commenced in September 1987 and supported by State Incentive Grant funding, QUIPP was established as a district-based, participant-driven, professional development opportunity. It has played an important role in improving the quality of instruction provided to students with mildly to moderately handicapping conditions. This supplemental training program has been a collaborative effort between the New York City Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers in consultation with the Council of Supervisors and Administrators. It has reflected the latest research on effective professional development models which place participants in key decision-making roles. As such, QUIPP has served as a model approach to professional development within the city school system.

During the program's first year of implementation (1987-88), each of the 32 community school districts and "The Chancellor's School" (IS 227) were eligible to receive allocations based on the number of eligible special education teachers and paraprofessionals in elementary and intermediate/junior high schools. Participants were limited to special education teachers assigned to self-contained classes (except newly-hired, first year teachers) and to special education paraprofessionals serving students with mildly to moderately handicapping conditions. Teachers were offered a total of 30 hours, and paraprofessionals were offered a total of 15 hours of professional staff development activities. These activities were determined by means of training needs assessments completed by the

eligible participants. District committees comprised of school-based and district-level educators and administrators were responsible for planning and organizing training activities based upon these needs. Training offered during school hours was designated as mandatory by the program guidelines, while participation in QUIPP offerings at other times was voluntary.

Although the essential structure of QUIPP was retained in the 1988-89 school year, amendments were made to offer 30 hours of staff development activities to all special education teachers and paraprofessionals, including crisis intervention teachers (CITs), resource room teachers (SIS-I), speech teachers, and paraprofessionals who deliver IEP-mandated services. However, first year teachers were not included, as they are required to participate in other staff development activities specifically designed to meet their needs. Other changes in the 1988-89 school year included offering undergraduate college courses to paraprofessionals and providing teachers and paraprofessionals options in which they could participate jointly. The gathering of participant input for activity identification and prioritization was also changed from the deficit-based concept of a needs assessment to an enhancement-promoting approach utilizing a professional interest assessment.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The stated goal of QUIPP is, "...to increase the knowledge levels and competencies of special education professionals so as to improve the performance of students with handicapping conditions."

The objectives of the 1988-89 program were as follows:

Objective #1: Special education teachers at the elementary intermediate and junior high school levels will increase their knowledge base and instructional

competencies in self-selected and locally determined areas of special education professional development opportunities through a variety of training options.

Objective #2: Special education paraprofessionals will increase their knowledge on self-selected areas of special education staff development for assisting students on learning activities which increase pupil performance.

Objective #3: Within each district, responsible groups that are representative of the eligible population and have real decision-making prerogatives will be established.

EVALUATION SCOPE AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of the evaluation for 1988-89 was to assess the involvement of the district-organized, participant-driven process upon which QUIPP is based. The evaluation was also to determine the impact that the year's activities had on both participating special educators and their students. A formative and summative evaluation design was developed by the Instructional Support Evaluation Unit of the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) with input from members of the Central QUIPP Advisory Committee and representatives of the district QUIPP advisory committees. This was in keeping with the participatory process that is the program's hallmark.

Information was gathered from each of the districts and IS 227 in two phases. The primary focus of Phase II was on the district process of program planning, organization, and implementation. A team of three visited ten districts and IS 227 and conducted structured interviews with all available members of the district QUIPP advisory committees (DACs), i.e. 142 individuals, as well as a 23 percent sampling of eligible participants (428 teachers and 165 paraprofessionals). Based on their common responses, closed-ended questionnaires were sent to all DAC members and to a

sample of eligible participants (2,640) in the remaining 22 districts. A total of 1,137 teachers and paras responded to the eligible participant survey. This represents 20 percent of the combined eligible population in those districts, although only one response was received in one district. From the 357 DAC members in the 22 surveyed districts, 195 responses (55 percent) were received. However, in two districts, no members replied.

Phase II of the evaluation primarily addressed the impact QUIPP had had this year on participating teachers and paraprofessionals as well as their students. The evaluation team conducted structured interviews of randomly selected participants in a representative sample of activities of two community school districts. The district administrators of special education (DASE) in the other 30 districts and IS 227 were asked to distribute a closed-ended questionnaire to all participants in four representative activities in their respective districts. Responses were received from 1,022 teachers and paraprofessionals involved in 163 readily-identified activities. Furthermore, each DASE, plus the chairperson of the IS 227 DAC, was asked to describe the evaluation process that had been used to assess the district's QUIPP activities for the year. Responses from 21 districts (64 percent) were received.

It should be stressed that the questions asked of interviewees in both Phase I and Phase II were not only open-ended, but they made little or no attempt to focus the interviewees on particular aspects or qualities of the program. That is, the questions were kept purposefully general to allow issues, problems, and positive qualities of QUIPP to surface of their own accord. Being closed, the survey questions better quantified the presence of certain of the interviewees' views. As a result, the tabulated responses frequently indicate the presence of trends or concerns but do not necessarily agree statistically with the tabulated results of the surveys.

Four of the five CAC members were interviewed as well in order to understand the workings of that committee. The interviews provided an understanding of the program coordinators' perspectives on program achievements, problems, and possibilities. They also served to place the district findings in the context of Board of Education and/or U.F.T. policies and priorities.

SCOPE OF REPORT

In six chapters, this report presents OREA's evaluation of QUIPP for the 1988-89 school year. The program organization and activities are discussed in Chapter II. In Chapter III, a report of the process followed by the central and district organizers in planning, implementing, and evaluating QUIPP is presented. The fourth chapter discusses eligible participants' responses to and feedback about the different phases, attributes, and activities of QUIPP. Chapter V outlines the impact of the program on both participants and their students. Conclusions and recommendations are contained in the sixth chapter.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

QUIPP is a program designed to respond on the district level to participant-identified professional development interests. It was organized to model and promote a collaborative, participatory process of planning and decision-making at all levels. The major actors involved in this process were the United Federation of Teachers (U.F.T.), the Council of Supervisors and Administrators (C.S.A.), and the Board of Education. At the central administration level, representatives of each of these players make up the Central QUIPP Advisory Committee. In turn, each participating community school district has a District QUIPP Advisory Committee which is responsible for developing and overseeing a set of activities responsive to the expressed interests of their eligible special education teachers and paraprofessionals. While a certain amount of direction and coordination is provided from the top down, the flow of ideas and plans is bottom-up.

CENTRAL QUIPP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Central QUIPP Advisory Committee (CAC) is comprised of five permanent members from the U.F.T., the C.S.A., and the Office of Professional Development and Leadership of the Board of Education. A number of individuals serve as resources to the CAC, including the Assistant Director of the Office of Budget and Review, the Unit Head of the Office of Management and Compliance (Division of Funded Programs), and teacher consultants of the U.F.T. Special Educator Support Program (SESP). The CAC plays a directive role in assuring district compliance to the guidelines of the grant agreement, although this function is seen as declining in importance as districts become familiar with the parameters and opportunities of the program. It also has a

technical assistance role in facilitating problem-solving within district QUIPP advisory committees (DACs) and a support role in the process of collaboration, consensus-building, open communication, and taking of program ownership. As the DACs become increasingly independent and self-reliant, the CAC sees its support role as becoming more dominant, providing formal and informal opportunities for DAC growth in programming, management, and group-process skills.

DISTRICT QUIPP ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Each of the 32 community school districts, as well as IS 227, has a District QUIPP Advisory Committee. Under the program guidelines, the DAC is composed of 12 permanent members:

- Three elementary school special education teachers (classroom-based);
- Two intermediate/junior high school special education teachers (classroom-based);
- Two special education paraprofessionals (one elementary and one intermediate/junior high);
- One special education supervisor (school-based);
- Two school principals (one elementary and one intermediate/junior high);
- One district coordinator for staff development;
- One superintendent or designee (district administrator for special education).

The teachers, paraprofessionals, and supervisory members of the DAC were designated by their respective district union representatives. Additional resource members, such as teacher trainers and curriculum specialists, were often selected to assist the permanent membership in surveying the eligible participants' needs and interests, developing the district's overall QUIPP design, and assuring proper implementation.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Each district identified topics and delivery formats for professional development activities on the basis of a professional development interest survey (Interest Inventory) of its eligible population. The number and range of QUIPP activities depended upon the results of the Interest Inventory as well as the availability of service deliverers, scheduling considerations, and participant levels of experience and service categories. Districts typically offered in-district workshops, college-credit courses, and retreats/conferences with either multiple workshops or intensive focuses. Some activities were drawn from professional development options offered by the Board of Education and the U.F.T. Others were collaborative arrangements of the DACs with local colleges, organizations, and businesses, or were organized within the districts themselves. Activities usually dealt with an aspect of adapting the curriculum to special education needs, new techniques or skills for varying or supplementing classroom teaching methods, behavior management/modification, or the special needs of different types of handicaps.

The program guidelines stipulated that districts ensure that eligible participants be offered a total of 30 hours of voluntary professional staff development activities. This required the combining of options, since not all activities met the minimum hourly requirements. Districts were also required to provide training in groups of no more than 25 persons. Participants (excluding CITs, resource room teachers, speech teachers, and paraprofessionals) could be released from classroom responsibilities to attend QUIPP activities scheduled during school hours when coverage was provided and classroom ratios maintained. Eligible teachers and paraprofessionals could be compensated for up to 30 hours of participation when activities were offered during non-school hours. Those selecting college or

university courses were enrolled tuition-free in lieu of the hourly training rate.

In order to enable sharing among representatives of DACs in areas of mutual interest and concern, the CAC organized a program conference entitled "Making Change Happen" in April 1989. The conference was scheduled for a school day, and DACs selected participants from among their membership. With the exception of a presentation of the formative evaluation's findings by OREA, all presentations were delivered by districts that volunteered to share. Presentation topics included: successful practices; promotional strategies; components that facilitate and foster the process of shared decision-making; and approaches to program design, implementation, and evaluation.

III. PROGRAM PROCESS FINDINGS

CENTRAL QUIPP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The CAC understood that the main program goals involved improving instruction for and learning of special education students via staff professional development. An important, additional goal, though, has been to model a systemic plan towards school-based management driven by the needs of students and educators. The first year's objective was seen as setting the framework within which participant-driven, district-organized training would evolve. In the second year, the emphasis was more on facilitating the assumption of program ownership by the district QUIPP advisory committees (DACs).

The role of the CAC in working toward the program goals has also evolved over time. Initially, the CAC served primarily in a directive capacity to the nascent DACs, but in the 1988-89 school year, technical assistance and support roles to the DACs became more dominant. Furthermore, the CAC saw itself as modelling the collaborative group process for the DACs, having moved from the adversarial postures inherent in the relationship between unions and employers to working relations marked by openness, trust, cooperation, shared decisions, and a united voice. The CAC members also described their group as hard-working, focused, professional, and collegial. However, to date, the C.S.A. representative has not been actively involved, although he has been kept fully informed.

However, awareness of the CAC and its purpose is not consistent among the DAC membership. Thirty-three percent of the DAC members participating in the evaluation were aware of the existence and purpose of the CAC. Another 33 percent were aware only of the CAC's existence. Thirty-four percent were not aware

of the CAC. The level of awareness about the CAC within a DAC varied from district to district. Table 1 shows that in 12 districts, one to 25 percent of the DAC membership were aware of the existence and purpose of the CAC, while no districts could claim that 75 to 100 percent of their members were both aware of the CAC and of its function.

TABLE 1
Awareness of the Central QUIPP Advisory Committee
(N=31)

Percentage of Respondents	Number of Districts		
	Aware of Existence and Purpose of CAC	Aware Only of CAC Existence	Not Aware of CAC Existence
No respondents	4	4	0
1 - 25%	12	8	13
26 - 50%	8	13	11
51 - 75%	7	5	4
76 - 100%	0	1	3

A breakdown by position of members aware of the CAC and its purpose was available for 20 of the 22 surveyed districts, revealing that those most aware of both the existence and purpose of the CAC were the district-level members. Seventy-eight (78) percent of the responding DAC members in those 20 districts indicated that they felt the need to know more about the CAC.

DAC members of the surveyed districts were asked to what degree they felt that the CAC had facilitated or impeded the process of developing and implementing their 1988-89 district QUIPP plans. Table 2 shows that, as a result of being unaware of the CAC or its purpose, 51 percent did not know what impact the CAC had had. Of the remaining respondents, 22 percent thought the CAC had played a facilitating role, while 16 percent indicated that the CAC had had both a positive and a negative impact on the process. Among the DAC members, some of those most in contact with the CAC cited the Board of Education representative on the CAC as being helpful by providing information and support during the planning process.

TABLE 2
Perceived CAC Impact on District Process
of Planning and Implementation
(Surveyed Districts Only)

CAC Impact	Number of Respondents (Percent)	
Facilitated the process	41	(23.0%)
Partially facilitated/ partially impeded the process	29	(16.3%)
Impeded the process	1	(0.6%)
No impact by the CAC	12	(6.7%)
Don't know	95	(53.4%)
Total	178	(100.0%)

Among the DAC members of both the interviewed and surveyed districts, suggestions for ways that the CAC could become better known and more helpful were made. These included:

- Attend occasional DAC meetings to explain, listen, and share;
- Have DAC representation on the CAC;
- Act as a clearinghouse for information on staff development, resources, other districts' QUIPP ideas, etc.;
- Provide clearer expectations of DACs;
- Improve the program guidelines, i.e. make them clearer and more complete, make them more flexible, set more realistic timeframes, and send them earlier;
- Improve the financial administration, especially in the release of funds and budget line item flexibility so that the planning and implementation of QUIPP plans can be realized on target;
- Provide more timely technical assistance and feedback; and
- Provide copies of QUIPP evaluations.

DISTRICT QUIPP ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Roles and Responsibilities

The program guidelines distributed to the DACs outlined their tasks for realizing a district-organized, participant-driven program. However, apart from specifying the need for a chairperson committed to a collaborative process, there were no further indications as to the process members were to follow in working together. Most of the members of the 20 responding DACs interpreted their roles and responsibilities as participating in general discussions and decisions at DAC meetings (97 percent), sharing information/promoting QUIPP in the schools (81 percent), and gathering input and feedback from eligible teachers and paraprofessionals (78 percent). Table 3 shows that there were other significant, but less frequently mentioned roles. It also

reveals that the tasks of planning course/workshop contents, organizing, and administration were left largely to district staff members who were often resource members. (Note: DAC members often made no real distinctions between active resource

TABLE 3
Perceived Roles and Responsibilities
of DAC Members, by Position
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Roles and Responsibilities	Percentage Respondents						Total (N=189)
	Teacher (N=77)	Para (N=24)	Supv. (N=18)	Princ. (N=18)	Dist. Office (N=39)	Other (N=13)	
Participate in general discussions & decisions	97.4	87.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.4
Serve on sub committees/ small groups	49.4	20.8	38.9	33.3	76.9	61.5	49.7
Represent a constituency	48.1	33.3	66.7	77.8	46.2	61.5	51.3
Planning course contents	29.9	20.8	61.1	38.9	74.4	76.9	45.0
Share info/ promote in schools	84.4	75.0	83.3	88.9	74.4	76.9	81.0
Gather T/P input and feedback	81.8	70.8	88.9	55.6	79.5	76.9	77.8
Organize & admin. tasks	36.4	16.7	61.1	72.2	94.9	69.2	54.0
Other	6.5	4.2	0.0	0.0	17.9	7.7	7.4

members and permanent members.) Available time to become more involved in these activities was a consideration for school-based DAC members, but the high levels of teacher/para member interest in receiving training in program planning, budgeting, and Board of Education procedures also indicate a lack of confidence and/or real opportunity to become equal contributors in these areas (see Tables 9 and 10).

Participant Awareness of the DAC

As evinced by their awareness of the DACs, the eligible participants of none of the districts demonstrated a high awareness of QUIPP as a district-organized program. Table 4

TABLE 4

Level of Participant Awareness of
District Advisory Committees
(N=32)*

Percentage Respondents Aware of Their DAC	Number of Districts
0% - 9%	0
10% - 19%	4
20% - 29%	3
30% - 39%	3
40% - 49%	3
50% - 59%	8
60% - 69%	10
70% - 75%	1
76% - 100%	0

* There were 31 districts and the Chancellor's School, IS 227.

reveals, for example, that in eight districts, 50 to 59 percent of the respondents were aware of the DAC. Less than half of 13 districts' respondents were aware of the DACs, and in none of the districts were more than 75 percent of the responding eligible population aware of the DAC.

Some interviewees who were aware of the DACs had suggestions for improving their respective DAC's role. These included informing program participants of how DAC members are selected, involving some newer staff members, and involving parents.

DAC Modus Operandi

Two indicators of how the committees operated were the frequency of meetings and the attendance level of members at those meetings. The average number of meetings that 30 DACs reported as being held during the 1988-89 school year was five, although some allowance must be made for the varying dates at which this information was requested (January - March 1989). The range of meetings held was from two to 18. Only three districts reported having had an average of ten or more meetings during the year. Attendance was reported as varying between 33 percent and 100 percent of the DAC members. Table 5 outlines the number of districts whose average reported attendance fell within different percentage ranges.

In the districts where interviews were held, additional comments were provided about participation in DAC meetings. Apart from calling for stricter attendance, suggestions were made to provide more advanced notice and/or reminders of meetings, to schedule meetings at more convenient times, and to investigate reasons for absenteeism. Others called for a re-examination of how DAC members are selected as well as the length of their terms of office. Some also felt a need for better orientation to member roles and responsibilities.

The degree of member involvement in DAC-assigned tasks was also examined. Responses from the surveyed districts showed that 45 percent were heavily involved in the development of the QUIPP plan, and 44 percent were "somewhat involved". Only eight percent said they were not involved, while another three percent said such involvement was not applicable to their membership on the DAC. Table 6 examines the breakdown of member involvement among the 20 responding districts, showing, for example, that 26 to 50 percent of the members of 11 DACs were heavily involved in the development of their respective districts' QUIPP plans. In two districts, no one reported that they were heavily involved in the planning process.

TABLE 5
Member Attendance of All DAC Meetings

Respondents per DAC	Number of Districts (N=30)
30% - 49%	1
50% - 59%	2
60% - 69%	9
70% - 79%	5
80% - 89%	3
90% - 99%	1 ^a
100%	9 ^b

^a This district had only three respondents.

^b Five of these districts had fewer than nine respondents.

TABLE 6
Level of Member Involvement in the Planning Process
(Surveyed Districts Only)
(N=20)

Respondents per District	Number of Districts			
	Heavily Involved	Somewhat Involved	Not Involved	Not Applicable
No respondents	2	5	13	16
1% - 25%	1	0	5	3
26% - 50%	11	6	2	0
51% - 75%	2	9	0	0
76% - 100%	4	0	0	1

In the interviewed districts, the evaluation team learned only whether or not members were involved in the planning process. None of the 11 sites reported more than 50 percent as involved in the process. Eighteen percent of the total combined DAC interviewees said they were not involved.

Further examination of member involvement by position in the surveyed districts revealed that those most heavily involved in the planning process were district staff and "other" members. Although none of the supervisors, principals, district staff, or "other" members reported not being involved, 13 percent of the responding teachers and 22 percent of the responding paraprofessionals said they were not involved. Some of the teachers, paraprofessionals, and supervisors did not feel that being involved in the planning process was applicable to themselves (see Table 7).

TABLE 7
Level of Involvement in Planning Process, by Position
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Level of Involvement	Percentage of Respondents						
	Teacher N=78	Para N=23	Supv. N=19	Princ. N=18	Dist. Office N=39	Other N=13	Total N=190
Heavily Involved	35.9	43.8	31.6	22.2	76.9	84.6	45.8
Somewhat Involved	48.7	34.8	63.2	77.8	23.1	15.4	43.7
Not Involved	12.8	21.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not Applicable	2.6	8.7	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

DAC members in the interviewed districts and IS 227 (35 percent) said that full and equal participation of all members was a feature of the QUIPP planning process. Only two percent commented on the dominance of one or a few members. When studied further, 80 percent in the surveyed districts, felt their respective DACs were characterized by full and equal participation of all members. Ten percent observed that discussions were dominated by one or a few members (see Table 8).

Similarly, the interviewed DAC members described a trend toward participatory and consensus-seeking approaches to making decisions. Nineteen (19) percent of the interviewees said all members were involved in setting policies, planning, and other decisions. At the same time, 38 percent of the interviewees reported that choices were based on proposals presented by a core group within the DAC. Eighteen (18) percent stated that a

consensus decision-making process was followed, while six percent said decisions were made primarily through voting.

The decision-making process was explored more pointedly in the surveyed districts. Here, 78 percent of the respondents said all members were involved in setting policies, planning, and other decisions, while 56 percent said choices were made based on proposals presented by a core group of members. Seventy-one (71) percent indicated they followed a consensus decision-making process. The 33 percent response to decisions made primarily through voting suggests that in some districts, where there was failure to reach consensus, members would resort to voting.

Table 8 also provides an understanding of other aspects of DAC working and interpersonal relations. Respondents in the surveyed districts gave greater substance to the interviewees' responses that relations were generally marked by collaboration, cooperation, warmth, and openness. Fifty-three (53) percent of the surveyed members stated as well that they had assigned roles and tasks.

Many DAC members from both the interviewed and surveyed districts provided suggestions for improving the planning process in their respective committees. The most frequently repeated recommendations centered around a desire to structure planning in a more timely way. Members in half of the interviewed districts thought that the DAC should distribute the Interest Inventory at the end of the school year, so that planning and organizing could take place over the summer when members are able to devote more time and attention to QUIPP. It was felt that this would also enable the DAC to compete more effectively with other programs for the participation of the eligible population: teachers and paraprofessionals could be informed about the offerings in advance of college registrations, and activities could commence in the fall semester.

TABLE 8
Modus Operandi of the DACs

Modus Operandi	Percentage Respondents		
	Surveyed Members ^a (N=131)	Interviewed Members (N=142)	Total (N=273)
Full/equal participation by all members	80.2	34.5	56.4
Discussions dominated by one or a few members	9.9	2.1	5.9
All members involved in policy, planning & other decisions	77.9	19.0	47.3
Choices based on proposal presented by core group	55.7	38.0	46.5
Decisions made mainly by consensus	71.0	18.3	43.6
Decisions made mainly by voting	32.8	6.3	52.0
Collaborative/cooperative process	89.3	50.7	69.2
Assigned roles & tasks	52.7	N.A. ^b	N.A. ^b
Warm, open relations among members	91.6	28.2	58.6
Covert/overt hostile relations among members	0.8	N.A. ^b	N.A. ^b
Other	3.8	N.A. ^b	N.A. ^b

^a Surveyed members of only 15 of the 22 districts surveyed.

^b Statistics not available.

Other frequent recommendations were to meet more often, to regularize meetings, and to improve member attendance at and participation in the DAC meetings. Members of several districts felt there should be a paid staff person to handle planning details and to coordinate the organization/implementation of the DAC-approved plan. Also, obtaining parent and community involvement in QUIPP, through representation on the DAC or input on needs, was considered important by some members. Some of the less frequently cited suggestions involved more delegating/sharing of tasks, increasing the size of the DAC, getting the paraprofessional members more involved, and engaging general education teachers and paraprofessionals with special education students in the process.

Competency-building Interests

Insofar as the design and implementation of district-organized, participant-driven professional development programs have been new experiences for the DAC members, it would not be realistic to expect that all felt equally prepared to fulfill their obligations. The types of training and/or orientation that the members desired in order to increase their effectiveness as individual members reflected their feelings of competency in participating in any given DAC task on an equal and effective basis with other DAC members. Requests showed that some feel they still do not possess an adequate understanding of the QUIPP program. Their responses to training or orientation for the group as a whole were also indicators of the levels of member satisfaction with the quality of the QUIPP offerings and participant involvement thus far, as well as of how well the DAC members were working together. In addition, they emphasized member inexperience and corresponding frustrations with the maze of administrative, legal, and fiscal procedures of the school system (see Tables 9 and 10).

TABLE 9
Percentages of Requests
for Training/Orientation for DACs as a Whole

Training Interests	Surveyed Members (N=136)	Interviewed Members (N=68)	Total (N=204)
Knowledge of other DACs' plans, problems & solutions, successes	80.9	20.6	60.8
Program planning & budgeting	38.2	14.7	30.4
Program monitoring & evaluation	21.3	0.0	14.2
Group dynamics	11.8	5.9	9.8
Board of Education standard operating procedures	32.4	7.4	24.0
Orientation to QUIPP	23.5	14.7	20.6
Effective communication in group	13.2	1.5	9.3
Promotional/public relations techniques & strategies	35.3	7.4	26.0
Identifying community resources for QUIPP activities	46.3	10.3	34.3

In addition to the training interests listed in Table 9, a number of other, related types of training were mentioned occasionally by DAC members of both the interviewed and the surveyed districts. These included:

- Roles and responsibilities of DAC members;
- Orientation to a new QUIPP school year;
- Strategies to involve parents and communities in QUIPP;
- Current trends and new strategies in staff development;
- Proposal writing and negotiating approvals;
- Record-keeping;

- Public speaking;
- Organizing major events;
- Conflict resolution;
- Leadership; and
- Organization and management of committee meetings.

Among both the interviewed and surveyed districts, individual DAC members expressed interest in a number of other types of training to enhance their personal contributions to QUIPP. Some of these were similar to those that many felt would be useful for all members of a DAC, but others included:

- Awareness of personal leadership and managerial styles;
- Time management; and
- Conducting impact evaluations of staff development in the schools.

TABLE 10

Percentages of Requests for Training/Orientation
by Individual DAC Members to Increase their Effectiveness

Training Interests	Surveyed Members (N=131)	Interviewed Members (N=62)	Total (N=193)
Orientation to QUIPP program and purpose	22.9	29.0	24.8
Effective communication in groups	15.3	3.2	11.4
Group dynamics	19.8	3.2	14.5
Assertiveness training	16.8	3.2	12.4
Program planning	45.8	9.7	34.2
Budgeting	45.8	4.8	32.7
Board of Education standard operating procedures	43.5	8.1	32.1

Table 11 provides a breakdown of individual DAC member training interests by their positions in the district. The teacher and paraprofessional members most often felt the need to know more about QUIPP. In addition, 65 percent of the paraprofessionals requested this orientation as compared to 32 percent of the teachers. Teachers and paraprofessionals were the main groups requesting assertiveness training. Significant percentages of teacher, paraprofessional, and district staff members wanted training in effective communication in groups and group dynamics. In each case, the paraprofessionals represented the most significant group among the three. Program-related training in planning, budgeting, and standard operating procedures was requested by a significant percentage of most member types. Sixty-two (62) percent of the responding principals were not interested in any training or orientation for themselves.

While DAC members were not questioned specifically about their preferences in training formats, their favorable response to the annual QUIPP conference indicates that this is clearly a viable way to address some of these DAC issues. A day-long conference was held on April 24, 1989 along the theme, "Making Change Happen". With the exception of a presentation of the results to date of this evaluation, the workshops were designed in accordance with the expressed interests of the DACs and presented by members of ten volunteering DACs. Topics included sharing successful practices, promotion, shared decision-making, and program design. Among the 63 attending members who participated in the conference evaluation, 97 percent felt that their interests were addressed, and 98 percent found the information provided useful. Eighty-eight (88) to 100 percent of the attendees at the individual presentations rated the degree to which the presentations met their objectives as good to excellent, the mean being 95 percent. Between 67 and 100 percent of the individual presentation attendees felt that the presentations had been very appropriate; the mean rating was 87 percent.

TABLE 11

Percentages of Individual Member Training Interests, by Position
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Training Interests	Percentage Respondents (N=129)					
	Teacher (N=50)	Para (N=17)	Supv. (N=14)	Princ. (N=13)	Dist Staff (N=26)	Other (N=9)
None	6.0	0.0	14.3	61.5	19.2	44.4
Orientation to QUIPP	32.0	64.7	7.1	0.0	3.8	11.1
Effective group communication	18.0	29.4	7.1	0.0	19.2	0.0
Group dynamics	18.0	47.1	7.1	7.7	23.1	11.1
Assertiveness training	26.0	29.4	0.0	0.0	11.5	11.1
Program planning	56.0	58.8	28.6	23.1	46.2	22.2
Budgeting	60.0	35.3	50.0	15.4	46.2	33.3
BOE standard operating procedures	54.0	41.2	42.9	7.7	46.2	33.3
Other	10.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	3.8	11.1

PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION PROCESSES

Assessing Professional Development Interests

The QUIPP program guidelines specified that the input of eligible teachers and paraprofessionals on their interests in professional development be obtained chiefly through an assessment form known as an Interest Inventory (I.I.). DACs were provided with a sample I.I. but were also free to design their own mechanism of securing eligible participant input. I.I.

formats aimed to determine eligible participant preferences for training topics as well as training formats and/or schedules. They were usually disseminated through the district mail system, at staff conferences or training sessions, or by DAC members and/or special education supervisors. The amount of time given to complete and return the I.I. varied from a few days to a few weeks, depending in part on the method of dissemination. I.I.s were usually collected in the same manner that they were distributed.

Table 12 shows that the largest group of DAC members said that their DACs opted to use the sample I.I. provided in the guidelines. Reasons most often given for this choice were convenience and the adequacy of the sample to meet DAC needs. Nevertheless, 23 percent of the DAC members said the sample had been modified, usually in an effort to obtain better information and/or to increase the eligible participant response rate. Twenty (20) percent reported that their DACs had prepared their own I.I.s, while another 20 percent did not know or recall what type of I.I. had been used.

It was striking that DAC members within a given district were inconsistent in their responses about what type of Interest Inventory had been used. This suggests that not all were involved in the decision about or design of the district's I.I., and reinforces the possibility that full and equal participation of all members in meeting the DAC's obligations has not yet been attained. Table 13 provides a breakdown of I.I. format responses by the opinion of the majority of each district's respondents, although this assumes that the majority were accurate in their recollections.

TABLE 12

Interest Inventory Formats Utilized by the DACs

I.I. Format	Percentage Respondents		
	Surveyed Members ^a (N=130)	Interviewed Members (N=141)	Total (N=271)
Sample I.I. provided in the program guidelines	22.3	51.1	37.3
Sample I.I. with minor modification	26.9	19.1	22.9
Prepared own I.I.	30.0	11.3	20.3
Don't know/recall what I.I. format used	19.2	19.9	19.6
Not applicable	1.5	0.0	0.7

^a Respondents from only 16 of the 22 surveyed districts provided input on this subject.

TABLE 13

I.I. Format Used by DACs, by Majority Opinion
(N=27)

I.I. Format	Number of Districts		
	Surveyed Districts ^a	Interviewed Districts	Total
Sample I.I.	6	7	13
Sample I.I. with minor modification	4	2	6
Designed own format	4	1	5
Don't know or recall	2	1	3

^a Respondents of only 16 of the 22 surveyed districts provided input on this subject.

Planning/Design of the District QUIPP Plan

Planning considerations and issues. While the tabulated professional development interests of eligible participants were the main determinants of the district QUIPP plans, many other factors were taken into account in the planning process as well. The most significant of these, as shown in Table 14, were: the availability of courses/workshops and qualified instructors to meet participant interests; district policies, goals and objectives; and results of the previous year's district-level program evaluation. Another which was voluntarily raised by many DAC members was the setting of schedules according to participant interests for training during the school day when there was a serious lack of available substitute teachers. Also, many felt that the use of substitutes usually resulted in student behavioral and/or learning disruptions.

TABLE 14
Factors Influencing the Design of District QUIPP Plans

Considerations	Percentage Respondents		
	Surveyed Members (N=188)	Interviewed Members (N=142)	Total (N=330)
Interest Inventory results	87.8	67.6	79.1
District policies, goals & objectives	51.6	3.5	30.9
DAC member special interests	18.1	7.7	13.6
Availability of existing courses & workshops	59.6	12.0	39.1
Availability of qualified instructors	50.0	3.5	30.0
Evaluation results of previous year's plan	59.6	3.5	35.5

Other considerations, large and small, which the DACs faced during the planning process included:

- CAC/guideline mandates (e.g. maximum class size) and deadlines;
- Successful features of other districts' QUIPP plans;
- Availability of class sites;
- Participant experience and formal education levels;
- A desire to increase staff morale and sense of professionalism;
- Special education students' needs;
- Categories of children served by the participants;
- Availability of funds;
- The duration of QUIPP activities;
- The need to send the QUIPP offerings to the eligible population in a timely way in order to increase enrollments; and
- City-wide changes in student testing formats.

Some of the factors influencing the selection of activity topics, formats, and schedules became topics of discussion for the DACs, but members also had their own concerns related to the creation and implementation of a successful program for the year. These tended to become significant issues at the DAC meetings, as outlined in Table 15.

Other matters which concerned the DACs were expressed in the voluntary comments of surveyed and interviewed DAC members. These included were such procedural or organizational matters as problems with budgets, the CAC and/or community school boards, the program guidelines and deadlines, and sometimes, DAC member roles and powers. Other programmatic issues included: the needs, goals and objectives of the district; mainstreaming; the desired participation of general education teachers and paraprofessionals; course participation criteria; student and/or community interests; parent involvement; registration levels (especially of

paraprofessionals); participant feedback during implementation; the quality of instructors; and other districts' QUIPP plans. Logistically, there was concern about activity locations and materials.

TABLE 15
Significant Issues Discussed at DAC Meetings

Issues	Percentage Respondents		
	Surveyed Members ^a (N=131)	Interviewed Members (N=142)	Total (N=273)
Training during school hours	63.4	20.4	41.0
Variety of topic and/or format choices	83.2	75.4	79.1
Mandatory vs. voluntary participation	35.1	0.7	17.2
Participation of teachers and paraprofessionals in the same activities	69.5	N.A. ^b	N.A. ^b
Promotion of QUIPP	76.3	12.7	43.2
Results of the first year's activities	59.5	9.2	33.3
Interest Inventory format	65.6	8.5	35.9
Interest Inventory results	64.9	65.5	65.2
Participant needs as perceived by DAC members	81.7	9.2	44.0

^a Members of only 15 of the 22 surveyed districts provided input on this topic.

^b Data not available.

Configuration of the District QUIPP Plans. The approved district plans of the ten interviewed districts (plus IS 227) provided the evaluation team with a representative sample of the activity topics for the different categories of eligible participants, formats, schedules, and service providers found in the 1988-89 QUIPP plans. Topics dealt with the following:

- Adapting the curriculum to the abilities of the special education child;
- Programs, methods, or "tricks" for varying, enhancing, or supplementing classroom instruction, including computer skills;
- Behavior management/modification; and
- Different aspects of physical, emotional, and intellectual impairment, such as a holistic examination of dyslexia.

Typical activity formats were:

- Workshops of varying durations held at district locations, either with or without the participants' students: special events, such as dinners, would sometimes be tied to miniworkshops to bolster professional morale and foster collegial networking;
- Credit courses in traditional classroom settings, whether held at a college or district school site;
- Credit courses of a mentor or consultant teacher type, taught in the participants' classrooms and usually also involving group sharing/learning sessions; and
- Retreats/conferences with themes or multiple mini-workshops, held at locations outside the city.

Most activities were of the first two types. Many districts, however, included retreats or conferences for the first time in their QUIPP plans, although for a variety of reasons, a few were subsequently cancelled. Few courses were taught within participants' classrooms, but judging by the interest expressed by some interviewed respondents in receiving this kind of learning assistance and by feedback from those who did receive it, more of this type of activity can be expected in the future QUIPP plans.

Service providers varied as well. The Board of Education and the U.F.T. opened courses and workshops they had developed, often in conjunction with a local college or organization (such as West End Symphony), as options the DACs could draw upon in developing their district QUIPP plans. However, the districts were also free to utilize the instructional resources of their school district systems and communities. Some workshops were developed with district personnel as instructors. Arrangements were also frequently made with nearby colleges and universities, and occasionally, businesses and professional organizations conducted workshops or allowed eligible QUIPP participants to attend their professional conferences.

Activity schedules were a major element of every district QUIPP plan. Usually, the preferences of eligible participants were made known through the Interest Inventories, and the DACs attempted to meet them through the service providers. However, the desire of many for training during school hours became a dilemma for the DACs, since students could not be dismissed from school for the implementation of QUIPP activities, and classroom teachers could not be released without the provision of substitute teachers, a rare commodity. Some district administrations prohibited training during school hours. As a result, most activities were offered on weekdays after school hours or on weekends. Training activities held during school hours usually included special education students among the participants or involved instruction and assistance in the teachers' classroom settings.

The QUIPP guidelines included a provision for materials related to the approved training activities. Although material costs could neither exceed ten percent of the districts' QUIPP allocations nor be used to purchase equipment or computer software (there being special budgets in each district for these items), this provision was regarded as an important feature of

the program's contribution to improving special education instruction and the mainstreaming process. Most materials, such as books and instructional aids used to implement a new approach to teaching reading and writing, were linked directly to the subject of a particular course or workshop. If clearly related to the QUIPP activities, materials for the total eligible population could be provided as well, resulting in the set up or expansion of resource centers and libraries in some districts.

Participant eligibility for course/workshop registration.

While the QUIPP guidelines specify that all eligible teachers and paraprofessionals be offered thirty hours of instruction during the school year, individual activities were often restricted to teachers, paraprofessionals, or specific types of teachers (e.g. MIS-II teachers, speech teachers, or junior high teachers). DAC members in the districts where interviews were conducted often remarked that fewer such restrictions were set in the 1988-89 district QUIPP plans, mainly in an effort to provide more options for the paraprofessionals. However, distinctions were retained in the college course offerings because of educational prerequisites (e.g. a Bachelor's degree). Others were limited to educators of certain categories of children or subjects taught in order to address the special nature of their interests and responsibilities.

Program Implementation

Promotion of QUIPP Participation. All QUIPP plans have built-in incentives to participate, as specified by the program guidelines. College credits toward a higher degree or salary differential could be earned (maximum 3 credits per participant per year). Participants in activities that did not offer college credits would be paid an hourly rate in accordance with their positions. The materials described in the previous section were provided free of charge to participants.

Participation in QUIPP activities was also promoted by the DACs, whether in a planned, organized fashion or an informal, ad hoc style. Methods fell into three general categories: printed or graphic materials, verbal communications, and social events or treats. In addition, some interviewed DAC members felt that relaxed activity environments, the visible interest and involvement of senior district officials, the timing of the Interest Inventory, and the quality and variety of the offerings (topics and instructional formats) served to attract attention to and interest in QUIPP activities.

Printed materials included not only the packet or brochure providing general information, the list of offerings, and registration instructions, but also materials providing updates and reminders about activities still available and/or for which participants had already registered. These included: newsletters/bulletins, flyers, memos, and personal letters or invitations; postings in the schools; and articles in the U.F.T. newsletter. Some DACs devised eye-catching graphics (logos, computer pictures, etc.) and catch-phrases that would both describe and be identified with QUIPP. These were used in printed materials as well as buttons and similar publicity devices.

Even more than the extra printed materials, verbal promotion served to make QUIPP known among the eligible population. Members of the DACs, especially those who are school-based, took advantage of opportunities to network with teachers and paraprofessionals about the QUIPP offerings and the benefits of participation. Supervisors were also major promoters in this regard, and in some districts, supervisors were kept abreast of changes and successes on a regular basis so that they might present an accurate and encouraging image of the program. Others sometimes involved in verbal promotion of QUIPP included: district office staff, U.F.T. representatives, school adminis-

trators, and satisfied QUIPP participants. Formal presentations about QUIPP were occasionally given at staff meetings, district-wide conferences, and mandatory staff development events.

Social functions tied with training activities were both incentives to participate and opportunities for teachers and paraprofessionals to know and network with colleagues throughout the district. The latter was an important objective of such activities as retreats and conferences. Refreshments at activities and special events, such as workshop dinners and kick-off breakfasts, also provided these benefits.

Flexibility/adaptability of the district QUIPP plans. During the implementation of a district's QUIPP plan, a variety of variables frequently resulted in adjustments. One major variable was the level of enrollment for a given activity. If registration figures were too low to cover the cost of an activity, it was cancelled, although it might occasionally be retained by removing participant classification restrictions. Where activities were cancelled, some DACs arranged for interested teachers and paraprofessionals to attend similar QUIPP activities in other districts. Conversely, unusually large responses to offerings would sometimes result in repeating those offerings later in the year or splitting them into two or more sections. At times, such variables as participant registration, changes in instructors, or logistical factors would require changes in activity schedules. Changes in instructor availability sometimes necessitated activity cancellations. Cancellations, in turn, often generated the development of alternate activities or the provision of materials not part of the original QUIPP plan. Other circumstances leading to changes in some QUIPP plans included potential bad press, late plan submissions, misunderstandings with the CAC, changes in the staff responsible for organizing and administering the plan, and community school board vetoes.

District Evaluation Processes

Twenty-one of the 32 school districts participating in QUIPP shared with the evaluation team information about their own internal program evaluation processes. Most of them gathered information on the quality and appropriateness of activity presentations and contents, on knowledge gained/satisfaction of learning objectives, and on the applicability or usefulness of the training. They also suggested that recommendations for improvements be made. Some evaluations sought feedback on the course/workshop instructors, participants' attitudes, and the effects of applying new knowledge in the classroom on student performance. The primary methods employed in gathering this information were activity evaluation questionnaires (usually with rating scales and extra space for comments) and informal interviews with activity participants. Some districts conducted observation visits of QUIPP activities, and some sought feedback by visiting participants' classrooms. A few districts noted that their program evaluations included unsolicited feedback, input from activity instructors, and/or an annual general program evaluation.

Fifteen (15) of the 21 responding districts were satisfied with the quality of information provided by their evaluations. Four were somewhat satisfied, and two were not satisfied with the evaluation processes used. Six indicated that they would like to receive technical assistance in planning future district QUIPP evaluations. A summary of their perceived needs follows:

- Designing a formal evaluation that will provide clear information on the application of new skills in the classroom and the effects of new practices on student learning;
- Designing effective, objective evaluation instruments;
- Designing evaluation instruments that can be analyzed on a personal computer;

- Designing questionnaires that would provide substantive information, as noted below, yet be simple in format, contain concise instructions, and require a minimum of effort to complete; and
- The quality of course contents:
 - Instructor effectiveness;
 - Location and schedule convenience; and
 - The duration of the activity.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS

ELIGIBLE POPULATION CONFIGURATION

The total number of eligible special education teachers and paraprofessionals in the 32 school districts and IS 227, as reported in 1988-1989 fiscal year QUIPP allocation breakdown, was 8,192 (3,822 classroom teachers, 2,613 other special education teachers, and 1,757 paraprofessionals). Twenty-one (21) percent, or 1,730, participated in the first phase of the evaluation, although 63 were not eligible, because they were in their first year as teachers or paraprofessionals.

The largest group of eligible participants (43 percent) had had six to ten years as special education teachers or paraprofessionals. The next largest group (30 percent) had had one to five years' experience in special education. Only 19 percent had had between 11 and 20 years, with two percent having more than 20 years experience.

Most of the respondents were classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. Among the classroom teachers, the largest group (49 percent) taught MIS I students. The largest groups of paraprofessionals were placed in MIS II classes (36 percent) or MIS IV classes (25 percent). Five percent of the responding teachers and nine percent of the responding paraprofessionals had bilingual classes. The nonclassroom teacher respondents were represented as follows: speech teachers, three percent; resource room teachers (SIS), 14 percent; and crisis intervention teachers (CIT), three percent. The response rate for each of the three categories in this part of the evaluation is as follows:

• Classroom teachers	28.8 %
• Nonclassroom teachers (SIS, CIT, Speech)	9.5 %
• Paraprofessionals	23.6 %

In the evaluation's second phase, attendees of QUIPP activities in the 32 districts each provided feedback on one of the activities they attended (IS 227 participants did not respond). Information on 190 different activities was received from 1,073 participants, although 34 respondents were not in any eligible participant category. The breakdown of responding activity participants is as follows:

• Classroom teachers	49.2 %
• Nonclassroom teachers (SIS, CIT, Speech)	20.6 %
• Paraprofessionals	25.7 %
• Other	3.2 %
• Unknown	<u>1.3 %</u>
Total	100.0 %

RESPONSE TO THE INTEREST INVENTORY

Eligible participants' awareness of QUIPP as a participant-driven program can be seen, in part, by their awareness of and involvement in their respective districts' Interest Inventory. As seen in Table 16, 66 percent of all responding teachers and 52 percent of all responding paraprofessionals recalled receiving an I.I. The proportion of paraprofessionals who declared that they did not receive an I.I. more than doubled that of the responding teachers. Ninety-two (92) percent of the teachers who received the Interest Inventory, and 90 percent of the paraprofessionals who received the I.I. completed it.

Eligible participants who were interviewed provided input on the relevancy of the Interest Inventory to their professional interests. With the exception of one district, the percentage of paraprofessionals who found the I.I. relevant was always equal to or greater than that of the teachers. In four districts, 100 percent of the interviewed paraprofessionals found the I.I.

TABLE 16

Participant Involvement in the Interest Inventory

I.I. Received	Percentage Respondents	
	Teachers (N=1,234)	Paraprofessionals (N=446)
Yes	66.4	52.2
No	13.8	31.8
Don't know/recall	19.8	16.0

relevant to their professional interests. The most common reasons why eligible participants did not find the I.I. relevant were that topics were too elementary, were unrelated to the teacher/paraprofessional's responsibilities, or were not new or interesting. Other respondents cited a lack of relevance to special education and/or the type of student served.

RESPONSE TO THE QUIPP OFFERINGS

As noted earlier in this report, eligible participants were advised of the QUIPP activities offered in their respective districts and encouraged to participate through a variety of promotional devices. Eighty-four (84) percent of the eligible participants involved in the evaluation received the list of offerings for their district. However, only 70 percent of the respondents said that they received other information or encouragement to participate. Of those providing information on the type of extra encouragement they had been given (N=1,384), 61 percent received written promotional/informational materials, and 52 percent received verbal encouragement. Some interviewees recommended that their DACs improve the quality and quantity of information given to eligible participants. They suggested that

DACs send the offerings earlier, describe changes in a clearer and more timely fashion, share complete information with special education supervisors, establish a district QUIPP newsletter, and provide child care attendants at activity sites.

The degree to which the participants who received the offerings found the topics relevant and the schedules convenient varied according to factors such as education, experience, student categories, time commitments, and logistics. However, 85 percent of the responding teachers (N=1,079) and 93 percent of the responding paraprofessionals (N=370) found the topics to some degree relevant to their professional interests. Seventy-two (72) percent of the teachers and 79 percent of the paraprofessionals found the schedules convenient to some degree. (Tables 17 and 18 provide a breakdown of these opinions for the surveyed districts' respondents.) The reasons why topics were considered irrelevant or schedules inconvenient were essentially the same as the reasons why eligible participants did not register for QUIPP activities (see page 44).

Fifty-four (54) percent of all teachers and paraprofessionals responding to the evaluation (N=1,730) said that they registered for one or more QUIPP activity in the 1988-89 school year. This represents 64 percent of those who received the QUIPP offerings (see Table 19).

TABLE 17
Relevancy of the Training Topics
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Opinions	Percentage Respondents		
	Teachers (N=790)	Paras (N=288)	Total (N=1,078)
All Relevant	18.4	20.1	18.8
Most Relevant	30.5	30.6	30.5
Few Relevant	32.0	33.0	32.3
None Relevant	10.0	9.0	9.7
Don't Know/Recall	9.1	7.3	8.6

TABLE 18
Convenience of Activity Schedules
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Opinions	Percentage Respondents		
	Teachers (N=781)	Paras (N=284)	Total (N=1,065)
All Convenient	14.2	21.8	16.2
Most Convenient	27.9	26.8	27.6
Few Convenient	29.6	30.3	29.8
None Convenient	20.6	13.4	18.7
Don't Know/Recall	7.7	7.7	7.7

TABLE 19
Configuration of Eligible Participant Response
to the QUIPP Offerings

	Percentage of Total Respondents (N=1,730)	Percentage of Total Receiving Offerings (N=1,449)
Received Offerings	83.8	--
Topics Relevant to Some Degree	73.1	87.2
Schedules Convenient to Some Degree	61.8	73.8
Registered	53.6	64.0

While many factors, in single and multiple configurations, would result in an eligible participant's nonparticipation in QUIPP, the most commonly expressed reason for not enrolling was an inability to attend activities outside of school hours. This was due to individuals' family and child care obligations, other jobs, other education commitments, and/or personal health constraints. Seventy-three (73) percent of the teachers and 61 percent of the paraprofessionals responding in the surveyed districts, who did not register for any QUIPP activity, were unable to participate for these reasons. Table 20 provides a breakdown of other significant reasons why eligible participants did not register for QUIPP in the 1988-89 school year. Some of the "Other" reasons provided included:

- Inadequate incentives;
- Activities unrelated to students' needs;
- Lack of choices;

- Approaching retirement;
- Administrative mix-ups;
- Preferred activity(ies) cancelled;
- Information received too late; and
- Not in the district at registration time.

TABLE 20
Participant Reasons for Not Registering

Reason	Percentage Respondents		
	Teachers (N=351)	Paras (N=88)	Total ^a (N=439)
Too tired	8.8	4.5	8.0
Other commitments	72.6	61.4	70.4
Transportation problems	12.3	10.2	11.8
Unsafe class locations	2.8	1.1	2.5
Topics irrelevant to professional interests	11.4	4.5	10.0
Contents too elementary	5.4	0.0	4.3
Barred from attending preferred activities	3.4	2.3	3.2
Not aware of the offerings	11.4	20.5	13.2
Not interested in receiving more training	8.8	8.0	8.7
Other	10.0	17.0	11.4

^aMissing cases = 30.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Throughout both phases of the evaluation, respondents were given opportunities to highlight aspects of QUIPP and/or the particular activities they attended that they particularly liked or disliked and to offer suggestions for program improvements. Opinions and ideas were shared on aspects of the program's structure, organization/ administration, and activities.

Participant Eligibility

Observations about who was allowed to participate in QUIPP activities were often made. In Phase-I surveyed districts, respondents were specifically asked for their opinions in this regard. Table 21 supports one of the most common recommendations of both the surveyed and interviewed participants during both phases of the evaluation, i.e. to allow the participation of general education teachers and paraprofessionals, especially those who had contact with special education students. It was felt that this would advance the process of mainstreaming as well as foster an appreciation of and respect for special education.

Interviewed participants' suggestions that first year special education teachers and paraprofessionals be allowed to participate were supported by the survey respondents. While many of the eligible participants had found the program offerings particularly appropriate to the less-experienced special educator, first year special educators were ineligible because of the mandatory training they undergo during that time. However, insofar as participation in QUIPP activities is voluntary after school hours, many felt that if the first-year staff wanted to receive additional training, they and their students could only benefit. Special educators with less experience were noticeably (and understandably) more eager to learn and had higher levels of energy to invest in extra activities than their more experienced colleagues.

TABLE 21

**Participant Recommendations for Eligibility Expansion
(Surveyed Districts Only)**

Recommendations	Percentage Respondents		
	Teachers (N=729)	Paras (N=284)	Total (N=1,013)
Allow first year special education teachers/paras to participate.	15.9	32.0	20.4
Allow general education teachers/paras to participate.	17.4	25.7	19.7
Allow special education supervisors to participate.	8.2	7.4	8.0
Allow related-service staff to participate.	11.9	7.4	10.7

Participants also felt that allowing related service staff, such as social workers and guidance counselors, to participate in QUIPP would have a positive effect. This was prompted by inclinations to view the education of children with special needs as a holistic endeavour. For this reason, some respondents suggested that parents and support service staff (i.e. bus drivers, lunch room personnel, school secretaries, etc.) should be allowed to participate in QUIPP. Other participation-related suggestions included:

- Allowing eligible participants to register for any district QUIPP offering (i.e. no restrictions by participant position);
- Allowing participation in other districts' QUIPP activities; and
- Limiting participation in computer courses/workshops to those with computers in their classrooms.

Program Incentives

Feedback was solicited from eligible participants in the surveyed districts about the in-built program incentives or benefits of QUIPP. Table 22 reveals that large percentages of both responding teachers and paraprofessionals appreciated the offering of college credits, pay for attendance, and free training activities. The proportion of paraprofessionals who appreciated college credit offerings and pay for attendance was greater than that of the teachers.

Significant percentages of survey respondents also called for improvements in the program benefits. Again, this was suggested by a larger proportion of paraprofessionals than teachers. However, many respondents of both the surveyed and the interviewed districts also offered suggestions for other program incentives, the most notable being to allow individual participants more than 30 hours of instruction (or one three-credit course) per year. Respondents were particularly assertive on this point where low enrollments in the district released funds and/or resulted in the cancellation of an activity. Other suggestions were to:

- Make course credits transferable to degree programs;
- Avoid changing or cancelling activities;
- Provide compensatory time as an optional benefit;
- Prohibit the involvement of supervisors in decisions about cancelling individuals' enrollment when registration responses exceed the maximum class size;
- Offer participants a choice of pay or credit benefits in courses; and
- Not charge for graduate courses.

TABLE 22

Participant Feedback on Program Incentives
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Opinions	Percentage Respondents ^a		
	Teachers	Paras	Total
<u>A. Liked:</u>			
College credits	48.9	61.7	52.6
Pay for attendance	48.1	53.9	49.8
Free training	46.7	42.0	45.4
=====			
<u>B. Needs Improvement:</u>			
Provide more credit courses	40.2	55.6	44.5
Provide better pay incentives	36.4	45.4	38.9

^a Number of respondents for A = 926 (657 teachers, 269 paras).
Number of respondents for B = 1,013 (729 teachers, 284 paras).

Program Organization and Administration

Reactions to the organization and administration of the program were mixed, based in part on the differences among the districts and the smoothness of individual participants' encounters with their districts' processes. Some participants' remarks focused on their respective DACs. Changes in DAC composition would lead to an improved program, according to some. For example, having a representative from each school on the DAC, having a paraprofessional from each school on the DAC, involving some newer staff members, and getting parents involved were suggested. Others wanted to know how they themselves could be considered for membership and how members were selected. Some

suggested that DAC members have more personal contact with eligible participants, while a few criticized their DACs as being secretive, cliquish, and union-dominated.

Registration regulations and procedures were raised by a number of respondents. Some were frustrated by registration mixups or by receiving activity information too late to enroll. As a result, suggestions were made to revamp registration procedures, to improve the recording of registration details, and to correct registration errors without penalizing the hapless participant.

Some suggestions about the Interest Inventory were also offered. These included improving teacher/para input into the selection of program offerings, doing an open-ended Interest Inventory, and obtaining more input from individual sites about their priority classroom material needs.

The processing of hourly training payments to participants was a problem for a number of respondents. Program organizers were urged to pay accurately and on time. Another suggestion was that participant cheques be sent to their home addresses.

Activity Schedules and Locations

Many respondents from the Phase-I surveyed districts (41 percent of the teachers and 38 percent of the paraprofessionals) felt that training schedules required improvement. This opinion was well-supported by the large number who did not participate in the 1988-89 activities because of other commitments (71 percent of the teachers and 56 percent of the paraprofessionals who did not register in the surveyed districts). Respondents from both the surveyed and interviewed districts often provided suggestions for making QUIPP activity schedules more accessible/convenient. These are listed below in descending order of frequency:

- Activities on the weekends, i.e. one day or half day;
- Summer courses and workshops (note: specifically requested by 37 percent in the surveyed districts);
- Activities during school hours, especially for paras; some thought that the use of substitutes was acceptable, while others did not;
- Activities in the fall semester, but not starting at the commencement of classes;
- Varied weekday activity days;
- Evening activities;
- Half-day staff development days;
- More travel time for after-school activities; and
- Activities during duty-free lunch periods.

The survey respondents who had completed their participation in the year's activities had a few additional suggestions based on their experiences. These included:

- Do not schedule training for the weekends immediately preceding the December holidays.
- Keep to scheduled dates.
- Space the activity sessions over more time, especially to allow for the digestion of learning and for planning.
- Schedule time for open forums in order to encourage implementation of new ideas, etc. and sharing of such experiences among colleagues.

The location of classes was an issue for some eligible participants, as demonstrated by the 12 percent who did not take part in the program because of transportation problems and the three percent who thought the sites unsafe. DACs were urged to mitigate these problems, especially by identifying sites near public transportation, with parking, and classes located centrally in the districts. Another frequent recommendation was to vary class sites. Others included holding classes for the school staff within their school, repeating the same activity at different sites, and holding weekend events out of town.

The comments about safe, convenient class locations and adequate parking were reiterated by some of the activity participants. Additional suggestions included providing larger classrooms and having more controlled environments. Others particularly liked having training activities outside the district school environment and thought that more could be done in such education facilities as the Hall of Science.

Activity Formats

In the second phase of the evaluation, activity participants were asked for feedback on the formats chosen for the presentation of the subject matter. The vast majority of the paraprofessionals (93 percent), classroom teachers (95 percent), and nonclassroom teachers (98 percent) considered the formats for the activities they attended to be either moderately or highly appropriate to the training subjects (see Table 23). Only 15 of the districts had some respondents of the opinion that the formats were minimally appropriate, and only seven had respondents who felt that the formats were not appropriate to the training they received.

Of those who felt that another format would have been more appropriate to the training subject than the one used this year, a variety of alternatives were suggested. However, because of incomplete or unclear information about the specific activities represented in this survey, the format provided could not be compared to the format preferred. Some respondents provided additional valuable suggestions for how the formats could be enhanced or expanded, as listed below:

- Add in-classroom sessions.
- Offer workshops of extended length.
- Build in follow-up activities.
- Offer a related series of workshops.

TABLE 23

Appropriateness of Activity Format to Training Subject

Opinion	Percentage Respondents (N=997)		
	Paras (N=267)	Classroom Teachers (N=511)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=219)
Very appropriate	74.5	74.2	84.9
Moderately appropriate	18.7	20.7	12.8
Minimally appropriate	3.8	3.1	2.3
Not appropriate	1.9	0.8	0.0
Don't know	1.1	1.2	0.0

Training Choices

Of all the characteristics about QUIPP that the eligible participants of the surveyed districts liked, the variety of activity choices received the smallest acclamation, i.e. 30 percent, or 31 percent of the teachers and 28 percent of the paraprofessionals. Since the quantity of offerings and their relevancy to participants' professional interests frequently determined whether or not individuals took part in the program, this was also one program aspect for which there were many recommendations. In descending order of frequency, the eligible participants of both surveyed and interviewed districts recommended offering:

- More choices (more credit courses, more topic variety);
- More advanced courses/workshops, i.e. a wider range of participant levels and more advanced topics. (In

the surveyed districts, 28 percent of the eligible teachers and 17 percent of the eligible paras felt this needed improvement);

- More activities available to paraprofessionals, especially undergraduate courses, e.g. courses required for certification;
- Activities that train teacher-para teams together;
- Activities geared to student categories/needs;
- Activities geared to elementary or junior high teachers and paraprofessionals;
- Nearby college courses and professional conferences;
- More activities of longer duration;
- Follow-up training activities;
- Activities designed for nonclassroom teachers/paras;
- Activities geared to the different student age levels;
- More activities in special education content areas;
- More activities related to the mandated curriculum;
- Activities related to neighborhood needs;
- Activities in collaboration with other districts;
- Activities that children can also attend;
- Activities with parent-teacher interaction; and
- Activities linking with other programs running in the district, especially model programs.

The teachers and paraprofessionals who attended QUIPP activities were asked whether the level of instruction in the activity they were commenting upon was appropriate to their education and experience. The vast majority said the instructional level was appropriate, although the paraprofessionals were more likely to find it either too advanced or too elementary (see Table 24). No significant difference was found between those who taught in elementary schools or junior highs.

TABLE 24

Appropriateness of Instructional Levels
to Education and Experience
of Activity Participants

Opinions	Percentage Respondents (N=1,004)		
	Paras (N=269)	Classroom Teachers (N=517)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=218)
Appropriate	89.6	94.6	95.9
Too advanced	6.7	2.5	0.9
Too elementary	3.7	2.9	3.2

At the same time, Table 25 shows that a slightly higher number of activity participants requested more advanced instruction and/or training with more theory and broader scopes. The paraprofessionals tended to request training with more foundation/theory and broader scopes than was requested by the teachers, which reflects the paraprofessionals' generally lower levels of formal education. However, the proportion of paraprofessionals requesting more advanced training levels was also higher than that of the teachers. This may be attributed, in part, to the activities that were designed solely for paraprofessionals.

TABLE 25

Activity Participant Suggestions about Instructional Levels
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Suggestions	Percentage Participants (N=873)		
	Paras (N=234)	Classroom Teachers (N=448)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=191)
More foundation/ theory	14.1	8.9	3.7
Broader scope/more all-encompassing	12.8	9.2	4.2
More advanced instruction level	9.8	7.4	5.8

Instructional Approach and Content

Many eligible participants from the surveyed districts indicated that they appreciated being offered practical training and innovative, fun activities, as noted in Table 26. They also felt that QUIPP could be improved by providing more in-depth coverage of subjects and more practical, hands-on, and innovative instruction. The latter, especially, was reinforced by the respondents of the interviewed districts. Other suggestions related to how instruction should be presented included:

- Structure time for participant questions, sharing, and feedback;
- Have instructors give sample lessons and demonstrations in the participants' classrooms;
- Have instructors design their lessons around the trainees' expressed needs and interests.
- Provide more one-on-one training, especially for the less-experienced teachers and paraprofessionals; and
- Have smaller class sizes.

TABLE 26

Participant Feedback on Training Methods
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Opinions	Percentage Respondents ^a		
	Teachers	Paras	Total
<u>A. Liked:</u>			
Practical courses	45.5	40.5	44.1
Innovative, fun activities	32.3	32.7	32.4
=====			
<u>B. Needs Improvement:</u>			
More in-depth coverage of subjects	20.0	13.7	18.3
More hands-on, practical, innovative instruction	41.6	28.2	37.8

^aNumber of respondents for A = 926 (657 teachers, 269 paras).
Number of respondents for B = 1,013 (729 teachers, 284 paras).

Those respondents who attended activities reinforced and expanded on this subject in their responses to the question asking for their suggestions to improve activity content. Although almost half of them did not feel improvements were needed, Table 27 describes ways in which contents could be enhanced. Most notable was the call for more practical training for all categories of teachers and paraprofessionals.

TABLE 27

**Activity Participant Suggestions for Content Improvements
(Surveyed Districts Only)**

Suggestions	Percentage Respondents (N=873)		
	Paras (N=234)	Classroom Teachers (N=448)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=191)
None needed	44.4	47.6	47.8
More practical	28.6	25.1	27.0
More specific (e.g. particular method)	10.3	10.9	11.0
Focus on a specific type of student	23.5	15.4	9.9
Other	9.0	9.8	14.7

Included in the category of "Other" in Table 27 were a number of suggestions, some of which have been mentioned in other sections of this report. However, others were to:

- Structure more practice and creative time.
- Explore relationships between problems and remedial activities.
- Relate all subjects (e.g. computers) to special education.

Training Instructors

Good instructors were considered an attractive feature of QUIPP by 43 percent of the eligible teachers and 54 percent of the eligible paraprofessionals responding in the surveyed districts (N=926). Among the activity participants, however, the percentage pleased with the instructor of the activities in

question was doubled (see Table 28). Respondents from ten of the 32 districts gave their instructors minimally qualified ratings; only four of the districts rated their instructors as poorly or not qualified.

TABLE 28
Activity Participant Assessments
of Instructor Qualifications

Opinion	Percentage Participants (N=1,014)		
	Paras (N=275)	Classroom Teachers (N=521)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=218)
Very qualified	83.3	85.0	90.8
Moderately qualified	8.7	11.5	6.9
Minimally qualified	4.0	1.0	0.5
Poorly/not qualified	1.5	0.4	0.0
Don't know	2.5	2.1	1.8

At the same time, nine percent of the eligible teachers and four percent of the eligible paraprofessionals thought that future QUIPP plans needed to improve the instructor quality. The activity participants, as well as the interviewed eligible participants, clarified this further by saying that instructors should be knowledgeable, stimulating, innovative, practical, and organized. Some suggested establishing a screening process for prospective instructors. Many of the respondents' recommendations, noted below, were concerned with who should or should not be considered when searching for instructors. Others addressed instructor conduct in the training classroom.

- Should be considered for instructor selection
 - Supervisors;
 - Experienced teachers and paraprofessionals, especially in mentor/consultant instructor activities;
 - Experts/professionals in their respective fields (e.g. psychiatry, art, music);
 - Community resource people;
 - Master teachers; and
 - Those who work and deal directly with schools.
- Should not be considered as instructors
 - Supervisors; and
 - Business people who are promoting a product.
- Instructor conduct
 - Should be polite, respectful, attentive (i.e. good interpersonal skills);
 - Should treat participants like professionals and be open to participants' ideas, etc.;
 - Should be adaptive to participants' interests and problems;
 - Should also adhere to the behavioral norms or rules set for the participants (e.g. absentee limits); and
 - Should have reasonable expectations of the participants regarding class assignments, etc.

Feedback on Activities Attended

Feedback on the activities about which participants were asked to respond was extensive and added to the portrayal of strong and weak points in training approaches/methods, training content, and instructor quality. Tables 29 through 34 describe the ratings that respondents assigned to each of the following elements in the 190 selected activities: organization; comprehensiveness, given the time available; qualities of interest and stimulation; learner participation; and relevancy/appropriateness of the content. The proportion of respondents giving a satisfactory, good, or excellent rating to

each of these elements was very high. The mean percents ranged from 94 percent to 96 percent. The nonclassroom teachers (SIS, CIT, speech) consistently gave the highest ratings, and the paraprofessionals repeatedly gave the lowest positive ratings. Nevertheless, none of the three general respondent categories had less than 92 percent giving positive ratings.

TABLE 29

Feedback on the Organization of the Activity Presentation

Ratings	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=271)	Classroom Teachers (N=525)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=219)	Total (N=1,018)
a. Excellent	58.8	55.2	64.4	58.2
b. Good	23.0	27.2	26.9	26.0
c. Satisfactory	12.8	12.8	6.8	11.5
a, b, c combined	94.5	95.2	98.2	95.7
d. Minimal ^a	2.9	2.9	1.4	2.6
e. Poor ^b	2.5	1.9	0.5	1.8
d & e combined	5.5	4.8	1.8	4.3

^aNumber of districts providing ratings of "minimal" = 19.

^bNumber of districts providing ratings of "poor" = 12.

TABLE 30

Feedback on the Comprehensiveness of the Activity
Presentation, Given the Time Available

Ratings	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=268)	Classroom Teachers (N=518)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=217)	Total (N=1,003)
a. Excellent	54.1	50.0	55.8	52.3
b. Good	28.4	32.0	33.2	31.3
c. Satisfactory	10.4	14.1	9.2	12.1
a, b, c combined	92.9	96.1	98.2	95.7
d. Minimal ^a	3.7	2.5	1.8	2.7
e. Poor ^b	3.4	1.4	0.0	1.6
d & e combined	7.1	3.9	1.8	4.3

^aNumber of districts with ratings of "minimal" = 16.

^bNumber of districts with ratings of "poor" = 9.

TABLE 31

Feedback on the Quality of Interest/Stimulation
of the Activity Presentation

Ratings	Percentage Participants			
	Paras (N=269)	Classroom Teachers (N=521)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=218)	Total (N=1,008)
a. Excellent	60.2	56.8	64.2	59.3
b. Good	24.2	25.5	25.2	25.1
c. Satisfactory	8.6	11.9	8.7	10.3
a, b, c combined	92.9	94.2	98.2	94.7
d. Minimal ^a	1.9	3.5	1.8	2.7
e. Poor ^b	5.2	2.3	0.0	2.6
d & e combined	7.1	5.8	1.8	5.3

^aNumber of districts with "minimal" ratings = 19.

^bNumber of districts with "poor" ratings = 14.

TABLE 32

Feedback on Learner Participation in
the Activity Presentation
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Ratings	Percentage Respondents			Total (N=959)
	Paras (N=255)	Classroom Teachers (N=501)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=203)	
a. Excellent	56.9	59.3	57.1	58.2
b. Good	28.2	24.4	30.5	26.7
c. Satisfactory	8.6	12.6	9.9	10.9
a, b, c combined	93.7	96.2	97.5	95.8
d. Minimal ^a	2.7	1.8	2.0	2.1
e. Poor ^b	3.5	2.0	0.5	2.1
d & e combined	6.3	3.8	2.5	4.2

^aNumber of districts with ratings of "minimal" = 14.

^bNumber of districts with ratings of "poor" = 14.

TABLE 33

Feedback on Relevancy of Activity Presentation
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Ratings	Percentage Participants			Total (N=960)
	Paras (N=256)	Classroom Teachers (N=501)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=203)	
a. Excellent	55.1	54.1	63.1	56.3
b. Good	30.5	26.1	28.1	27.7
c. Satisfactory	7.0	13.6	4.9	10.0
a, b, c combined	92.6	93.8	96.1	94.0
d. Minimal ^a	4.3	3.6	3.0	3.6
e. Poor ^b	3.1	2.6	1.0	2.4
d & e combined	7.4	6.2	3.9	6.0

^aNumber of districts with "minimal" ratings = 19.

^bNumber of districts with "poor" ratings = 16.

TABLE 34

Feedback on Practicalness of Activity Presentation
(Interviewed Districts Only)

Ratings	Percentage Participants			Total (N=51)
	Paras (N=13)	Classroom Teachers (N=23)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=15)	
a. Excellent	53.8	60.9	40.0	52.9
b. Good	30.8	26.1	20.0	25.5
c. Satisfactory	0.0	4.3	33.3	11.8
a, b, c combined	84.6	91.3	93.3	90.2
d. Minimal	15.4	4.3	6.7	7.8
e. Poor	0.0	4.3	0.0	2.0
d & e combined	15.4	8.7	6.7	9.8

The activity participants of the surveyed districts also provided feedback on the physical and social aspects of their activities' learning environments. The physical elements addressed were the size of the training groups and the adequacy of the training space provided. Table 35 shows that most respondents found the group sizes good and the training spaces appropriate. Likewise, Table 36 reveals that most found favor with the flexibility of the activities to participants' needs and the relaxed atmospheres. Volunteered comments provided clarification on both positive and negative opinions of the learning environment. The positive included:

- The sharing of learning, ideas, etc.;
- Cooperative, warm, and/or friendly group;
- Good interaction between participants and instructors;
- Patient, helpful, and/or approachable instructor;
- Appreciation of training sites outside the city; and
- Appreciation of refreshments.

The reasons for critical opinions about some aspects of the learning environments were more numerous. They included the following:

- Poorly furnished/equipped classrooms;
- Classrooms unattractive, dirty, and/or not set up;
- Classrooms too small or inconvenient (e.g. located on fourth floor of a walk-up building);
- Air conditioning/heat not provided, inadequate, or too noisy;
- Inadequate time to make use of the facilities for which the site was selected;
- Too many different academic levels in the class; and
- Instructor problems, e.g. inconsiderate, inflexible to participants' needs, "taught nothing", treated participants like children.

TABLE 35

Physical Aspects of Activity Learning Environments
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Opinions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=258)	Classroom Teachers (N=500)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=205)	Total (N=963)
Group too large ^a	3.1	4.6	5.9	4.5
Group size good	74.4	68.8	69.8	70.5
Group too small ^b	2.7	1.4	2.0	1.9
Inappropriate space ^c	4.3	7.2	4.9	5.9

^aNumber of districts with "group too large" = 20.

^bNumber of districts with "group too small" = 12.

^cNumber of districts with "inappropriate space" = 24.

TABLE 36

Social Aspects of Activity Learning Environments
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Opinions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=258)	Classroom Teachers (N=500)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=205)	Total (N=963)
Flexible to needs ^a	70.2	74.4	75.6	78.7
Relaxed atmos- phere ^b	84.5	83.2	90.2	85.0
Formal setting	12.0	5.8	4.4	7.2

^aThe range of district percentages with "flexible to needs" was 46 percent to 94 percent.

^bThe range of district percentages with "relaxed atmospheres" was 59 percent to 100 percent.

Program Materials

In the surveyed districts, 54 percent of the eligible teachers and 50 percent of the eligible paraprofessionals who responded (N=926) said they liked the materials that QUIPP provided. Many in the interviewed districts also voluntarily expressed appreciation for the program materials and wanted to receive more in the future. Some specified that they would like QUIPP to provide computers, funds for student field trips, or school-level materials and equipment (e.g. library materials and audiovisual equipment), but others were concerned with the following:

- Allowing individual schools to order their own materials;
- Having materials supplement training activities;
- Reproducing books and materials presented in training activities for use in participants' classrooms; and
- Providing adequate quantities for activity participants.

In the second phase of the evaluation, participants were also asked about any materials provided in the activities attended. Most of the respondents (89 percent) indicated that materials had been provided in these activities. However, the paraprofessionals were slightly less positive about the materials' appropriateness to the training subjects, to their usefulness, and to their adequacy. Nevertheless, over 90 percent of each participant category gave "moderate" to "great" ratings to these aspects (see Tables 37 through 39).

TABLE 37

Activity Participant Assessment of the Appropriateness
of Materials to the Training Subject

How Appropriate?	Percentage Respondents			Total (N=942)
	Paras (N=260)	Classroom Teachers (N=480)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=202)	
Greatly	69.2	76.9	80.2	75.5
Moderately	25.4	20.6	16.8	21.1
Minimally ^a	4.6	2.1	3.0	3.0
Not appropriate ^b	0.8	0.4	0.0	0.4

^aNumber of districts with "minimally appropriate" = 17.

^bNumber of districts with "not appropriate" = 4.

TABLE 38

Participant Assessment of Usefulness
of Materials Provided in Activity

How Useful?	Percentage Respondents			Total (N=928)
	Paras (N=253)	Classroom Teachers (N=476)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=199)	
Greatly	65.2	69.1	68.8	68.0
Moderately	26.5	26.5	25.1	26.2
Minimally ^a	5.1	3.8	4.5	4.3
Not useful ^b	3.2	0.6	1.5	1.5

^aNumber of districts with "minimally useful" = 18.

^bNumber of districts with "not useful" = 13.

TABLE 39

Participant Assessment of Adequacy of
Materials Provided in Activity

How Adequate?	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=256)	Classroom Teachers (N=477)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=197)	Total (N=930)
Greatly	66.4	69.0	70.0	68.5
Moderately	28.1	25.6	25.4	26.2
Minimally ^a	4.7	4.2	4.1	4.3
Not adequate ^b	0.8	1.2	0.5	1.0

^aNumber of districts with "minimally adequate" = 21.

^bNumber of districts with "not adequate" = 7.

The participants also had suggestions for improving the provision of materials in individual activities. Some called for more equipment, such as film projectors, for use in QUIPP activities. Others, apart from wanting to see QUIPP provide more materials, suggested providing:

- Materials for demonstration and practice;
- More hands-on materials;
- More materials for classroom use (including their timely distribution);
- Handouts, such as lesson plans, for an activity;
- Better quality books (i.e. more detailed information);
- Detailed lists of books used and cited in an activity, including publishers and bookstores; and
- Music and videotapes and films (omitting those showing "all too perfect" students).

V. PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

PROGRAM IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS

Understanding and Expectations of the Program

In the 10 interviewed districts, plus IS 227, eligible participants were asked to describe their understanding of the purpose of QUIPP. While only one percent clearly characterized QUIPP as a participant-driven staff development program, most described the program in terms of increasing their knowledge and skills, building staff morale and sense of professionalism, and/or improving the quality of service to special education students. Two percent thought QUIPP's purpose was to provide classroom materials, and 15 percent admitted they had little or no idea of the program's intentions.

Eligible participant interviewees of the evaluation's first phase also were questioned about what they expected from QUIPP for themselves on an individual basis. Fifty-two (52) percent did not reply, and another four percent had no expectations. Eight percent of those who did respond expected classroom materials, and five percent looked to add credits to their academic records. The rest of those responding (87 percent) wanted to add to their knowledge, skills, and storehouse of classroom ideas, and to feel better as professionals.

When asked what expectations they had for their students through QUIPP, 59 percent did not reply. Nine percent of those responding (four percent of those questioned) had no expectations. Fifteen (15) percent of the responding interviewees expected their students to benefit in relation to what they, themselves, learned through QUIPP, but the majority (76 percent) hoped their students would advance in learning, develop better

attitudes to education (i.e. enjoy learning more), and/or behave better/develop effective social skills.

The eligible participants of the surveyed districts revealed their expectations of QUIPP by identifying indicators of program impact on themselves and their students. Table 40 shows that teachers and paraprofessionals had similar expectations for their students, but in terms of impact on themselves, paraprofessionals expected more than the teachers.

Responding participants of the 190 activities in the evaluation's second phase indicated at what level their learning expectations for the identified activities were met. Eighty-five (85) percent gave ratings of seven through ten on a scale of zero to ten (ten being the highest possible level of attainment). Only one percent gave tens, but 49 percent gave nines. The nonclassroom teachers (SIS, CIT, speech) gave the highest ratings overall. While paraprofessionals gave the lowest ratings of the three participant categories, 80 percent felt their expectations were met at levels seven through ten (see Table 41).

TABLE 40

QUIPP Impact Indicators, by Participant Position
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Indicators	Percentage Respondents		
	Teachers (N=733)	Paras (N=264)	Total (N=997)
Students more motivated to learn.	39.6	34.5	38.2
Students behave more appropriately.	24.0	26.9	24.8
Students and staff communicate/relate better.	35.7	36.4	35.9
Students progress academically more quickly.	18.0	13.6	16.9
=====			
Teachers/paras feel valued as professionals.	49.5	68.2	54.5
Teachers/paras in better control of classroom situations.	32.7	54.9	38.6
Teachers/paras more motivated/enjoy teaching more.	43.9	52.3	46.1
Teachers/paras request more training.	28.4	45.5	32.9
=====			
Methods, techniques, materials are relevant to & facilitate teaching general curriculum.	52.4	38.6	48.7
Special education & general education staff understand each other & collaborate more.	33.8	37.9	34.9

TABLE 41

Activity Attainment of Participants' Learning Expectations

Numerical Ratings	Percentage Participants			
	Paras (N=261)	Classroom Teachers (N=521)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=213)	Total (N=995)
0 (zero) ^a	1.1	0.6	0.0	0.6
1 - 3 ^b	5.0	4.6	2.3	4.2
4 - 6	13.8	9.6	9.4	10.7
7 - 8	29.1	34.5	40.8	34.5
9	49.8	49.3	46.9	48.9
10	1.1	1.3	0.5	1.1
=====				
7 - 10	80.1	85.2	88.3	84.5

^aThe number of districts with respondents giving ratings of zero were only four.

^bWhile twenty districts had respondents who gave ratings of one through three.

Interest in Further Training

Activity participants were also asked if they would like more training in the subject of the specified activity. Although 71 percent overall said that they would, the classroom teachers requested additional training less often than did the paraprofessionals or nonclassroom teachers. The nonclassroom teachers had the highest percentage of affirmative replies. Looking at the responses on a district basis, 70 to 79 percent of the respondents in thirteen districts requested further training. In four districts, 80 to 89 percent said yes to further training, and 90 to 99 percent in three districts said the same (see Tables 42 and 43).

TABLE 42

Activity Participants Who Want More Training
in the Same Subject, by Position

Further Training	Percentage Respondents			Total (N=974)
	Paras (N=260)	Classroom Teachers (N=503)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=211)	
Yes	71.2	68.6	75.4	70.7
No	28.8	31.4	24.6	29.3

TABLE 43

Activity Participants Who Want More Training
in the Same Subject, by District
(N=32)

Percentage of Respondents	Number of Districts
35 - 39 %	1
40 - 49 %	2
50 - 59 %	2
60 - 69 %	7
70 - 79 %	13
80 - 89 %	4
90 - 99 %	3

Activity participants who wanted further training in the subject of an identified activity were asked to specify what such training should address. Their most common requests were for practical, "hands-on" demonstrations and activities, for focusing on specific groups of children (e.g. by problem, age, or level), for a different aspect or focus on the subject, for more of the same (a progression), and for training at a more advanced level. Others included:

- More specific coverage, versus generalized training;
- Integration of the subject (e.g. computers, art, career education) into other curriculum subjects;
- Materials and games to use as teaching aids;
- Additional ideas, methods, etc. in teaching the subject;
- Teaching/dealing with the subject in special education.

Participant Feelings as Educators

Activity participants in the 30 surveyed districts indicated how they were feeling as professional educators as a result of participating in QUIPP and of being able to use/not use what was learned. Table 44 reveals that the program's impact was greatest on their outlook on the future of special education students. Overall, 65 percent felt more hopeful for their students (73 percent of the paraprofessionals, 62 percent of the classroom teachers, and 60 percent of the nonclassroom teachers). Another positive impact of the program was on the participants' feelings as better qualified educators. Again, the paraprofessionals had the highest proportion feeling this difference, but overall, 46 percent of the activity participants felt better qualified. Also of note were the percentages of paraprofessionals who felt less frustrated and more confident with their students, as compared to the percentages of teachers who felt the same. Only nine percent of the responding participants claimed that the activity attended had no impact on their feelings as professional educators.

TABLE 44

Activity Impact on Participants' Feelings
as Professional Educators, by Position
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Feelings	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=236)	Classroom Teachers (N=475)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=189)	Total (N=900)
No impact	7.2	10.5	7.9	9.1
More hopeful for special education students	73.3	62.1	59.8	64.6
More appreciated/ valued by school system	21.2	16.2	22.8	18.9
More supported/ less alone	25.0	21.1	23.3	22.6
Refreshed	36.4	36.8	49.7	39.4
Less frustrated	42.8	24.8	23.8	29.3
Better qualified/ more competent	50.8	41.7	48.7	45.6
More confident with students	48.7	34.5	32.3	37.8
Other	3.8	4.6	4.8	4.4

When participants' responses were examined by district, the data revealed that in no surveyed district did less than 40 percent feel more hopeful for special education students as a result of participating in the program. Also, up to 49 percent of these districts' respondents felt more supported (see Table 45).

TABLE 45

Activity Impact on Participants' Feelings
as Professional Educators, by District
(Surveyed Districts Only)
(N=30)

Feelings	Number of Districts within Percentage Ranges								
	0-9%	10-9%	20-9%	30-9%	40-9%	50-9%	60-9%	70-9%	80-9%
No impact	21	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
More hopeful for special education students	0	0	0	0	4	10	5	7	4
More appreciated/valued by school system	4	14	6	5	0	1	0	0	0
More supported/less alone	4	7	11	5	3	0	0	0	0
Refreshed	1	3	4	5	11	3	1	2	0
Less frustrated	1	5	10	8	5	0	0	1	0
Better qualified/more competent	0	0	4	5	10	7	3	1	0
More confident with students	0	3	7	8	2	8	2	0	0
Other	24	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPLICATION OF LEARNING

Much of the training provided in the different districts was carried out during the spring semester (1989). As a result, not all participants had adequate time or opportunity to put what they had learned into practice. There were also instances where teachers and paraprofessionals attended courses or workshops which did not immediately apply to the situations in which they were teaching. These included changes in the participants' responsibilities or student composition, or the lack of necessary equipment in the classrooms, such as computers.

For other participants, obstacles existed which either inhibited or completely prevented them from applying new knowledge and skills. District policies (e.g. regarding the use of a particular approach to language arts), unsupportive school atmospheres, and inadequate materials and supplies were obstacles for some. Others, who work in paraprofessional-teacher teams, found that the application of learning in the classrooms was more difficult if their team partners had not received the same training.

In spite of the lack of time and opportunities and the existence of obstacles in the schools or classrooms, 44 percent of the activity participants reported that they had encountered no obstacles to using what they had learned. Table 46 reveals that there was little difference among the three participant categories in this regard. It also describes the presence of other obstacles that the participant categories encountered.

TABLE 46

Obstacles Encountered by Activity Participants
in Applying Knowledge and Skills, by Position

Responses	Percentage Participants			
	Paras (N=242)	Classroom Teachers (N=483)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=203)	Total (N=928)
No obstacles	45.5	44.5	42.9	44.4
Not applicable	17.4	25.9	26.6	23.8
No opportunity to use yet	21.5	12.4	15.8	15.5
Inadequate class materials	7.0	13.5	8.9	10.8
Teacher/para partner did not receive same training	17.4	7.0	1.0	8.4
Uncooperative/ unsupportive school adminis- tration ^a	1.7	2.1	0.5	1.6
District policies ^a	3.3	2.3	2.0	2.5
Other	3.7	5.0	8.4	5.4

^aFifteen (15) respondents from ten districts reported obstacles of unsupportive school administrations. Twenty-three (23) respondents from 15 districts reported obstacles in district policies. Eight districts had respondents reporting both unsupportive school administrations and district policy obstacles.

When participant responses were examined by elementary and junior high school personnel, few differences were found. However, twenty percent of the junior high participants reported having had no opportunities to apply what they had learned, compared to only 13 percent of the elementary school participants (see Table 47).

Apart from those "other" responses that would have been more properly included in the above-mentioned response categories, other obstacles encountered by some activity participants were largely the result of limitations in the training provided and systemic problems:

- Training limitations/weaknesses
- Learning not practical/realistic enough (e.g. too theoretical);
- Learning not appropriate to individualized student settings (e.g. resource room);
- Insufficient training/preparation; and
- Learning not applicable in special education;
- Systemic problems
- Lack of coordination between different classes attended by the students (e.g. speech with other subjects);
- Organization of school day (e.g. teacher's lunch period took place during the students' computer access time);
- Required to apply specially for funds for necessary materials;
- Students not "programmed" for subjects like art and music; and
- Interruptions in the classroom by district office supervisors and other staff.

PROGRAM IMPACT ON SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

With the special education students being the program's ultimate target group in terms of benefits, it was important to determine whether the 1988-89 QUIPP activities were having an impact on the participants' classes. Any changes could be determined only through the teachers' and paraprofessionals' perceptions of the activities they attended in the 1988-89 school year. Not only was the program only in its second year of implementation, but quantitative objectives had not been set prior to program implementation. A number of individuals in the districts, both DAC members and program participants, have recognized the need to articulate a long-term impact evaluation plan, complete with measurable as well as qualitative indicators that can be tracked on an annual basis.

Program participants, having applied what they gained from QUIPP activities with their students, noted changes (sometimes dramatic) in their students. Differences were seen in a number of areas: interest or involvement in learning, understanding and retention of knowledge, behavior, communication with teacher and/or paraprofessional, self-confidence/self-esteem, and attendance.

Tables 47 through 53 describe the changes that the participating teachers and paraprofessionals noted in their students. Moderate to great changes were seen by: 81 percent of the respondents in their students' interest and involvement in learning; 74 percent in their students' understanding and retention; 72 percent in their students' behavior and communication with them; and 78 percent in their students' self-confidence/self-esteem. Only 51 percent saw moderate to great changes in student attendance.

Differences were found among the responses in the three participant categories. For the most part, the nonclassroom

teachers reported the highest rates of change in their students, and the paraprofessionals reported the lowest rates. (This pattern was completely reversed in the perceptions of change in student attendance.) There was very little difference among the three participant categories with regard to changes in student behavior. However, data suggests that the crisis intervention teachers (CITs) found less change than all other respondents did in the behavior of students.

Few respondents volunteered reasons why they had seen few or no changes in their students. However, of those given, the most frequent reasons were the lack of time to apply their own learning in the classroom and the nonapplicability of that learning to their students. Others said that they had not yet had opportunities to apply their learning or that they could not discern the impact on the students apart from the students' enjoyment of the classroom activity.

TABLE 47

Changes Perceived in Student Interest/Involvement in Learning
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents			Total (N=618)
	Paras (N=156)	Classroom Teachers (N=348)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=114)	
No change	10.9	6.6	7.9	7.9
Minimal change	14.1	12.1	3.5	11.0
Moderate change	40.4	50.3	47.4	47.3
Great change	34.6	31.0	41.2	33.8

TABLE 48

Changes Perceived in Student Understanding and Retention
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=147)	Classroom Teachers (N=318)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=98)	Total (N=563)
No change	13.6	8.5	11.2	10.3
Minimal change	16.3	17.0	8.2	15.3
Moderate change	45.6	49.4	44.9	47.6
Great change	24.5	25.2	35.7	26.8

TABLE 49

Changes Perceived in Student Behavior
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=157)	Classroom Teachers (N=330)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=97)	Total (N=584)
No change	11.5	11.8	19.6	13.0
Minimal change	17.2	17.0	7.2	15.4
Moderate change	40.1	46.1	37.1	43.0
Great change	31.2	25.2	36.1	28.6

TABLE 50

Changes Perceived in Student Behavior
by Nonclassroom Teachers
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents (N=97)		
	Speech Teachers (N=18)	Crisis Intervention Teachers (N=12)	Resource Room Teachers (N=67)
No change	11.1	25.0	20.9
Minimal change	16.7	8.3	4.5
Moderate change	50.0	41.7	32.8
Great change	22.2	25.0	41.8

TABLE 51

Changes Perceived in Effective Student Communication
with Teacher/Paraprofessional

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=162)	Classroom Teachers (N=315)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=93)	Total (N=570)
No change	11.1	14.0	16.1	13.5
Minimal change	14.2	16.5	9.7	14.8
Moderate change	38.3	40.3	45.2	40.5
Great change	36.4	29.2	29.0	31.2

TABLE 52

Changes Perceived in Student Self-Confidence/Self-Esteem
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=154)	Classroom Teachers (N=332)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=100)	Total (N=586)
No change	11.7	10.8	12.0	11.2
Minimal change	12.3	11.4	6.0	10.8
Moderate change	37.7	42.2	41.0	40.8
Great change	38.3	35.5	41.0	37.2

TABLE 53

Changes Perceived in Student Attendance
(Surveyed Districts Only)

Perceptions	Percentage Respondents			
	Paras (N=143)	Classroom Teachers (N=294)	Nonclassroom Teachers (N=79)	Total (N=516)
No change	28.0	38.4	43.0	36.2
Minimal change	12.6	13.6	12.7	13.2
Moderate change	36.4	29.9	25.3	31.0
Great change	23.1	18.0	19.0	19.6

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The overall feeling of participants about QUIPP was very positive. Many voluntarily remarked that a professional development program, providing practical instruction and offering opportunities to network with one's colleagues, was been long overdue. As detailed in the preceding chapters, criticisms about various aspects of the program, including activities attended, were numerous. However, in no way should these criticisms be seen as outweighing the favorable feelings expressed about specific activities or the program as a whole.

Some of the most common descriptions of QUIPP by both eligible and actual participants were "helpful", "useful", "interesting", "excellent", "stimulating", "enjoyable", and "valuable". Many expressed hope that the program would continue. Some notable quotes from written comments were as follows:

"Have been in the education field for 17 years, and this is the best workshop I've ever attended."

"Due to the enthusiasm of the teachers who participated, several teachers in our school plan to attend the Pocono Environmental Education Center."

"It was a pleasure to be dealt with as intelligent, competent, knowledgeable professionals who are highly receptive to increasing the level of our knowledge."

Participants also appreciated the opportunities QUIPP afforded for interaction among teachers and paraprofessionals in the district. Many felt that the program encouraged the advancement of paraprofessionals, that it was especially good for less experienced teachers and paraprofessionals, and that it provided good opportunities for professional revitalization.

Some who had not participated in the 1988-89 activities of their district observed that they would like to attend in the future.

QUIPP has been an innovative program for the public school system in two ways. As a district-based effort, QUIPP has afforded people from within various levels of district school systems an opportunity to gain experience and confidence in the process of collaborative planning and management. It also set out to improve the quality of education for special education students through participant-driven, professional development activities for teachers and paraprofessionals.

The responses of CAC and DAC members indicated clearly that, while the districts are at different stages of engaging in a truly participatory process and of taking ownership of their district plans, there has been overall progress from the first year toward achieving a genuine, district-based program. The many program organizers and participants commented without being asked to that QUIPP was much better in its second year, strongly support this conclusion. Nevertheless, the constraints of time and expediency had an impact on the level of involvement of school-based members in the process. Beyond its impact upon the quality of planning and implementing district QUIPP plans, the lessons that the DAC members learn from the collaborative process can potentially affect other district programs and operations in which they are involved. Central and district organizers should be encouraged and enabled to foster these developments in any way possible.

Conclusive evidence of QUIPP's effectiveness in improving the quality of instruction provided to special education students will not be available for several years yet. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that QUIPP is successfully addressing the professional interests of many teachers and paraprofessionals, and that with the resolution of such problems as schedules and

promotion, even larger numbers will benefit. It has also had the effect of improving staff morale and enthusiasm. However, the fact that participants are using what they have gained through QUIPP activities in their classrooms and are seeing changes in their students as a direct result must be seen as a major achievement of the program at the end of its second year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Regardless of QUIPP's considerable achievements to date, much remains to be accomplished, both in terms of enhancing the DAC's capabilities to work in a collaborative, participatory manner, and of making the program activities more accessible and more responsive to the eligible participants. The following recommendations are based on the criticisms and suggestions of all who participated in the evaluation.

Improving the Collaborative and Participatory Process

The QUIPP organizers at the central and the district levels readily criticized one another for failing to meet each other's needs or expectations during the planning and implementation phases. The DACs need to take steps to work together in a more collaborative, participatory manner. At the same time, the CAC can also become more responsive to the needs of the DACs and better foster collaboration and participation between the CAC and DACs.

A strengthening of the CAC's support role to the DACs would facilitate the DACs' efforts to improve their group process and program results. It would also model the sort of responsive and personal relationship the DACs could enhance among themselves and eligible participants. City-wide and/or borough-wide training workshops have already been identified by DAC members as interests or needs. An annual "Interest Inventory" of their professional development and support requirements for the

improvement of QUIPP would also enable the CAC to provide timely and appropriate technical assistance. Where possible, academic credits or certificates of participation could be provided to give additional incentives and recognition of member efforts.

In addition to the ad hoc and informal style that characterizes most of the communications between the CAC and the DACs, more frequent, regular, formal communication to the DACs would help channel useful information, updates, etc. Depending on the format of communication, the CAC could also promote networking among the DACs. One possible means of accomplishing this would be to publish a QUIPP newsletter that could share news about successful and innovative district QUIPP activities or processes, provide training resource information, update or clarify parts of the program guidelines, give ideas and tips, and share program participant feedback.

Visits to each DAC by a CAC member at least once a year would help establish a more personal and trusting relationship between the two committees. Such visits would afford all DAC members an opportunity to ask questions and to better understand the role and limitations of the CAC. These visiting CAC members would observe, listen to, and make themselves accessible to all members, not just the DAC chairperson, U.F.T. representative, or DASE. They would gain, thereby, a more complete understanding of the DAC group process, its problems and successes, and its plans for the future.

Any of these recommendations could be implemented by all or some of the CAC members. Considering the interest the DAC members expressed at the April 1989 QUIPP conference, the CAC expects to increase its membership to include a number of DAC members. The establishment of working groups to focus on such tasks as a QUIPP newsletter might distribute the burden of effort required among the increased membership.

On the whole, increased efforts of DACs to realize the full participation of all members in the planning and organization process of the committees would yield more appropriate types of training and more creative approaches to meeting participant needs. Particular responsibility rests with members holding positions of power and authority in the district (i.e. all except the teachers and paraprofessionals). They need to make special efforts to create an environment whereby teacher and para members (especially paraprofessionals) are encouraged and supported in voicing their ideas and opinions, especially those that might differ from those of the "powers that be", without fear of generating conflict with repercussions for members outside of the context of their DAC functions. Additionally, teacher and para members need to feel that their comments and suggestions are given equal value and are incorporated into DAC decisions.

The clarification of policies by the CAC and/or the DACs to all members and eligible participants on how DAC members are selected, the length of member terms, and other matters affecting member involvement in DAC tasks would reveal steps the DACs could take to increase their active, interested membership. The level of individual member involvement in the process could also be improved in this way. The DACs need to make certain that despite the demands of extra time and energy, school-based members, in particular, are interested in QUIPP and both willing and able to commit themselves to full participation.

The DACs also need to provide new members with an orientation to the program and to the DAC. Specifically, all DAC members should have a complete understanding of and commitment to the program process and the objectives of QUIPP. They should also be fully aware and accepting of their roles and responsibilities as DAC members.

Making QUIPP More Relevant and More Accessible

Given that QUIPP's goal of improving the performance of special education students through professional staff development activities cannot be achieved in one or two years, it is important that the CAC, with the DACs, establish clear, quantitative and qualitative program objectives. Because the priority needs of special education students vary somewhat from district to district, each DAC should set both intermediate-range objectives (e.g. three to five years) and short-term (annual) objectives that will focus on the key needs of their special education students and be addressed by the types of training activities offered by the program. The objectives need to be such that each DAC will be able to track its progress toward the objectives' achievement over time on a regular basis. This would include the gathering of relevant statistics and qualitative data on both program participants and their students. As one means of accomplishing this, the CAC, with the DACs, may wish to explore the utilization of student needs assessments by eligible participants to which the participant training interests assessments would subsequently be related.

Various restrictions currently in the program guidelines need to be addressed if QUIPP is to remain inherently participant-driven. Resolving other issues through clarification or renegotiation of the program guidelines would also do much to facilitate improvements in the quality of the program planning/organizing process, the quality of program offerings, and the level of program participation. These include:

- * Addressing the issue of a budget line for the administrative support of QUIPP in the districts;
- * Providing practical, realistic means for training eligible participants during school hours;
- * Permitting individuals to participate (with credit/pay) in more than 30 hours of training if overall registration in a district is low;

- * Clarifying the voluntary nature of participation in QUIPP and the reasons for this policy;
- * Allowing general education teachers and paras with mainstreamed students, as well as staff with regular contact with special education students (guidance counselors, social workers, lunchroom, and bus staff) to participate in relevant QUIPP activities; also first-year special education teachers/paras should be encouraged, as well as permitted to attend; and
- * Allowing limited numbers of parents of special education students to audit QUIPP activities, as appropriate.

Promotion of QUIPP among eligible participants would yield better results by improving the quality and variety of information the DACs distribute. The timing of promotional efforts/dissemination of QUIPP offerings is also critical to achieving better results. Information should be sent well in advance of the scheduled activities. With the exception of special add-on activities, the program offerings should be distributed before the eligible participants make their educational choices for the year. Methods of promotion and information dissemination should be specially targeted at reaching eligible paraprofessionals.

The involvement of paraprofessionals, as well other eligible participants, in QUIPP might be increased if promotional pieces were aimed to facilitate the activity registration process. The content of promotional devices should also stress the participant-driven, district-organized nature of QUIPP (including information on the makeup and role of the DAC).

Training activities that focus on technical skills, such as working with computers, should be offered only to eligible participants who have, or shortly will have, the means of using their new skills in the classroom. Likewise, steps need to be

taken to make certain that recipients of training in new teaching methodologies or approaches will have the necessary materials and supplies in adequate quantities available for themselves and their students.

Elimination of activity participation restrictions by teacher/para category would enable professional development beyond the requirements of participants' current student configuration or position responsibilities. Essential course or degree pre-requisites, if any, should be clearly stated in activity descriptions. If the resulting demand for an activity is exceptionally high, either extra sections of the activity should be added or that activity should be repeated later that year.

Provision of some offerings whose subjects (e.g. reading in the content area) are focused on working with specific student levels (e.g. elementary, junior high), different types of student problems (e.g. MIS V, MIS II, English as a second language), and different levels of participant education and teaching experience would provide many participants with more relevant training options. This need not affect the open registration policy, noted above. Accurate titles and clear, detailed activity descriptions in the program offerings would allow eligible participants to make their own sound decisions.

Eligible participants with specialized interests or responsibilities (e.g. CITs) often had difficulty identifying relevant QUIPP offerings. These people do not exist in great enough numbers to justify the expense of a QUIPP-organized activity. However, the full or partial payment of costs by QUIPP for attendance at courses, conferences, etc. outside the QUIPP offerings should be considered as long as it can be established that the activity will benefit the participant's students. The

identification of new training resources for future QUIPP plans might be an added benefit.

Insofar as instructors are probably the single greatest determining factor in a QUIPP activity's being found useful and enjoyable, the DACs would be well-advised to establish simple review procedures for prospective trainers. Instructors should be both qualified in the subject matter they are presenting and skilled as teachers of adults. Participants made it clear that trainers should be examined as to whether they have something new, practical, or stimulating to offer, whether they can relate their subject to the realities of special education in an urban setting, and whether they relate well to adult learners. Methods that might be considered include:

- * The observation of prospective instructors by one or a group of DAC members in instructional settings similar to the one the DAC is considering;
- * The informal interviewing of present or former pupils of the prospective instructor; and/or
- * Recommendations from known and respected colleagues (including eligible QUIPP participants) who have worked with or observed the prospective instructor in an adult learning environment.

Removing Systemic Obstacles

Decentralization of the public school system has been a policy of the Board of Education for some time, and QUIPP is a valued outgrowth of this trend. Nevertheless, the continued existence of centralized controls in many areas remains a fact of life for the community school districts. This is not to say that controls and other vehicles for holding districts accountable should be eliminated. Nevertheless, ways and means must be found to remove those obstacles inherent in the system which not only are unsupportive of district-based and/or participant-driven programming but actively deter such programming from achieving objectives. The Board of Education and the community school

districts themselves need to assume a more supportive, enabling role by fulfilling their respective responsibilities in a more efficient manner and by working to remove obstacles to QUIPP's greater success and sustainability. These include:

- * The lack of substitute teachers who can release eligible participants for training held during school hours;
- * The lack of regular staff development days throughout the school year;
- * Inadequate and inequitable provision of classroom materials;
- * Policies preventing the introduction of viable and stimulating ideas/approaches to teaching in the classrooms of students with special problems; and
- * Severe delays in releasing program funds.